

PLUCK AND LUCK

COMPLETE STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

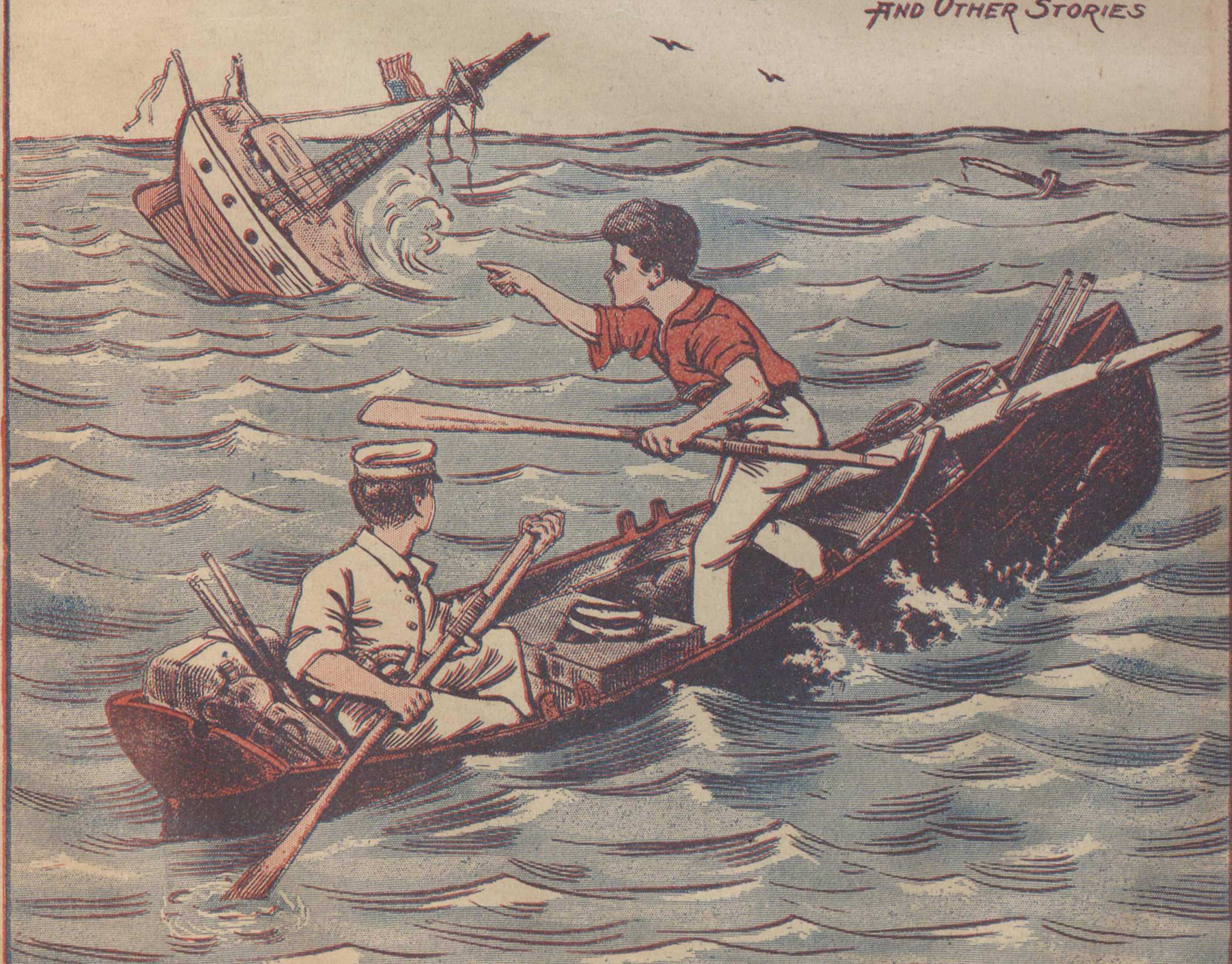
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ABANDONED; -OR- THE WOLF MAN OF THE ISLAND. BY CAPT. THO'S. H. WILSON. *AND OTHER STORIES*



"Look!" said Bob. The ship surged forward, lifted her bows out of the water, then dipped, with her stern high in the air, and went down. Dick said, sadly: "Good-bye. Now, Bob, where are we?" "The Lord only knows."

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Stories of Adventure

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ABANDONED

— OR —

THE WOLF MAN OF THE ISLAND

By CAP'T THOS. H. WILSON

CHAPTER I.

"Avast there, ye lubbers! What're ye up to?"

"Trying to shin up the foremast halyards, cap'n, on a bet."

"Come down, ye fools! You'll break your blasted necks!"

This conversation occurred between the captain of the full-rigged, three-masted schooner Alice and two young men, aged respectively twenty-one and twenty-two years.

Both were young men of fortune, and were natives of New York, and, for want of something to do to occupy their time, had concluded to take a trip to the South Seas.

They had taken a first-class cabin passage on the ship Alice, bound for Australia.

The captain was a man of forty, and on board of his own craft was considered a "masher," so far as the ladies were concerned.

Bob Myers and Dick Swift, the two young passengers, had that morning, in their stateroom, become engaged in a friendly contest as to who was the best climber, and determined to settle it that day in a friendly contest.

The captain did not like either of the two young men, for reasons that will be explained hereafter.

So he said to himself:

"Let 'em go, the monkeys! And if they kill themselves, so much the better!"

Bob was ahead.

Dick sang out to him:

"Go it, old man; I'll follow!"

"You'll get a jugful."

"I'll risk it."

Hand-over-hand Bob went up the rigging, and in the same manner Dick followed, the understanding being that neither was to touch his feet to the halyards.

Dick reached the crow's-nest.

Seating himself there alongside of the man aloft—the lookout—he looked down at Dick, who was advancing slowly.

"Look out, King Richard!" he sung out. "If you don't take care you'll reach no rest this day!"

"Never you mind, my hearty!"

A moment later Dick was seated alongside of Bob in the crow's-nest, saying:

"Now, my royal duke, what next?"

"You daren't go across hand-over-hand to the mainmast, then to the mizzenmast, and slide down the lazy-jack to the boom."

"Will you follow?"

"You bet!"

"Done!"

There is only one rope connecting the masts of a ship together. To cross it is necessary to grasp this rope with the hands, the body being entirely under the rope and supported by nothing except the grip of the hands and the muscles of the arm. To fall is certain death by being dashed to pieces on the deck from a fearful height.

Sailors never cross from one mast to the other in this manner, except as a piece of foolhardiness, to show how expert

they are, and many are dashed to pieces on the deck as the result, a quick roll of the ship being often sufficient to break their hold.

It was this dangerous feat that Dick now determined to accomplish.

The lookout in the crow's-nest expostulated.

Dick silenced him with:

"You shut up, Tarry Jack. We know what we're about, don't we, Bob?"

"You bet we do. Come, propel."

Taking hold of the mainstay, Dick swung himself off and hung suspended between heaven and earth.

Across he went like a monkey, and gained the crosstrees on the mainmast.

Bob followed.

"Come on," said Dick, his mettle up, and went across to the mizzen-mast in the same way.

Bob came after.

They were now on the mizzen-mast crosstrees.

The next thing was to slide down the mizzen-mast lazy-jack. The schooner was close-hauled, and the lazy-jacks on the windward side were slack.

Both were pretty well exhausted, but both were on their mettle also.

Bob shouted:

"Come, cut ahead, if you're going to lead."

Crawling out hand-over-hand on the gaft, Dick reached the lazy-jack and slid down it, hand-over-hand, to the boom without touching his feet.

Bob followed and arrived safely upon deck.

So far neither had outdone the other.

Each had shown his expertness, but neither had conquered.

"Dick," said Bob, "let's go up the foremast as far as the topmast and slide down the flying jib-stay, if you dare."

"Agreed."

"And then walk back to the deck along the jib-boom without touching a hand to the rigging."

"I'm your man."

No sooner said than done. Up went Bob, climbing the shrouds to the crow's-nest, followed by Dick.

The old sailor growled out:

"You two'youngsters'll get booked for 'Davy's locker' if you ain't careful."

"Never you mind, old Tarry. Come along, Dick."

Bob caught the jib-stay and commenced to go down, hand-over-hand, on the windward side of the jib.

The jib was drawing well, and as long as it kept so the feat could be accomplished, but if it were ever taken "aback" it would inevitably knock the man off the jib-stay into the sea.

Bob accomplished the feat successfully, and stood upon the jib-boom waiting for Dick.

But the latter never reached the spot.

When about half-way down an unfavorable flaw of wind whistled down right on the schooner's bow, dead ahead.

The jib was taken aback.

The heavy canvas came against Dick with full force, breaking his hold.

An instant later, to the horror of the passengers and seamen, who were watching the dangerous feats of the two young men, Dick was in the sea and had disappeared from view, while through the ship resounded that terrible of all cries on shipboard:

"Man overboard!"

CHAPTER II.

The passengers, who had been watching the daring feats, uttered cries of horror, especially one girl, a young lady of eighteen, who wrung her hands and cried out:

"Save him! Save him!"

Bob, on the end of the bowsprit, looked down into the water, but could see nothing of Dick.

It would have been madness for him to jump.

All he could do was to turn pale, utter a groan and watch. The first mate sang out:

"Lower the boats!"

The yawl dropped first, with such force that its bottom was split open, and it filled.

"Avast there, ye lubbers!" shouted the mate. "Let the long boat go easy. If ye split her open I'll dock ye a month's pay."

The boat was lowered quickly but easily, with her crew on board.

The wind had freshened, and the schooner was plowing through the water like a racehorse.

Dick must be fully a mile astern by this time.

"Cast off!" shouted the mate.

A voice said:

"What's the matter with you all? You look as if you were going to have a fit."

Most of the crew and passengers were in the stern of the schooner, looking back on her wake.

Turning, they saw Dick, standing amidships, with a smile on his face.

His clothing was dripping.

"What's the row?" he asked.

Bob ran in from the jib-boom, exclaiming:

"Hurrah! How in thunder did you get here?" he asked.

Dick led him to the side of the schooner and said:

"Do you see that rope?"

"Yes."

"Well, I happened to catch hold of that. I had a mighty hard time of it, though, pulling myself out of the water. The schooner was going ten knots, and it tailed me out like a pickerel bait."

"You're lucky."

"Well, that's so."

The passengers crowded around Dick, expressing their congratulations; but it was noticeable that the girl who had cried out "Save him! Save him!" did not appear.

She was down in her stateroom crying, and repeating often: "Thank heaven! Thank heaven!"

"Come, come; this won't do," said the mate to Dick. "You must go down to your stateroom and change them wet duds, youngster."

Dick took the hint and went down, followed by Bob.

"You've won the bet, old man," said Dick.

"Guess not."

"You gained the deck and I didn't."

"Well, we didn't count in the possibility of the schooner being taken aback. One's as good a climber as the other. Fact is, Dick, we're both fools."

"Right you are."

"I'm going to swear off all that kind of business."

"Swear it is."

The bell rang for dinner.

"Hungry, Dick?" asked Bob.

"As a wolf."

At the dinner-table all the passengers and the captain were assembled, the first and second mates being on duty on deck.

All except one seemed pleased to see Dick back again, alive and well, and that one was the captain.

The pretty girl of eighteen, who had cried out when Dick fell overboard, looked at him with a thankful expression on her face, but when he happened to glance at her, her eyes instantly sought her plate, and she proceeded with her dinner demurely.

The captain's face wore an expression of dissatisfaction.

He wished Dick had been drowned, for this reason:

For the first time in his life he was in love, and it was with pretty Nellie Newcome.

He did not like the looks she was constantly bestowing upon

Dick, when she thought he was not looking, and they made him swear, in his heart, a dozen times a day.

His ill-temper getting the better of him, he broke in upon the conversation by saying to Dick:

"Mr. Swift, do you intend to obey the regulations of this ship?"

"Certainly, if I know 'em."

"There's a copy of them in your stateroom."

"I've never taken the trouble to read 'em."

"Passengers are prohibited from going aloft."

"Well, I went, all the same."

"And you were the cause of the loss of the yawl."

"Sorry for that."

"Do you intend to pay for the boat?"

"Guess not."

"It's your duty."

"I don't see it."

"It was stove in your service."

"No, sir; I was on deck by the time the boat struck the water."

There was at the table, in the seat next the captain, an individual with long hair, where he had any at all—for the top of his head was as bald as a bat—and yellow, cadaverous visage.

His meagerness did not arise from abstemiousness, for he was the heaviest feeder on board the ship, and the quantity of food he stowed away in his capacious maw was amazing.

He was a professor in one of the Eastern colleges, on a trip to Australia for his health, and had with him a wiry fellow of twenty-one named Hunter, who had come along for pleasure.

"Professor," said the captain, "Mr. Swift has broken the rules of the ship. You know the law. What shall be the punishment?"

"Verily, I know not," replied the professor. "Unless it be answered by one of the proverbs of Solomon, 'Spare the rod and spoil the child.' Of a truth, it seemeth to me that the instrument you call the cat—though why it should be so called, I know not—would have a most salutary effect."

The passengers smiled.

"That will hardly do this time," said the captain. "But at the next offense I'll think of it. As it is, Swift, I shall place you under arrest. You will be confined to your stateroom ten days—go!"

Dick continued placidly picking a chicken bone, but stopped long enough to say:

"Guess not."

"You refuse to obey?"

"You have it."

The captain, who was a big, burly fellow, whose weight would make nearly two of Dick, arose from the table, saying:

"Then I shall have to enforce my order by taking you there myself."

He arose, went to Dick and, placing his hand on his shoulder, said:

"Come."

Dick arose, saying:

"Hands off."

"Will you go?"

"Not much."

"Then I'll take you."

He gave Dick a pull, and the next moment found himself lying flat on his back in the cabin, knocked down by a blow struck straight from the shoulder.

"Oh!" groaned the professor, with both hands nursing his stomach. "Young man, you are preparing for yourself an abode in the bottomless pit."

"Shut up, you old mummy!" exclaimed Bob. "If you open that fly-trap of yours again, I'll give you the same."

Hunter, who sat by the side of the professor, looked daggers.

"Yes, and I'll serve you the same way, if you make any fuss, you sneak," said Bob.

The captain got up and rushed at Dick.

He struck a terrible blow, which was neatly parried, and again measured his length on the floor.

When he arose again he had enough of it.

He staggered into his stateroom to wash the blood from his face and solace his defeat with brandy.

All left their seats and went out on deck.

Nellie Newcome was standing on the lazy-jack, looking over the taffrail into the glassy surface of the sea, the weather having become suddenly as still as a dish.

The girl had been at boarding-school in the United States and, having graduated, was on her way to join her parents in Australia.

Suddenly she exclaimed:

"Oh, oh! The monster!"

Dick lounged to the spot, saying:

"What is it, Miss Nellie?"

"A shark. Look!"

It was indeed a monstrous shark that lay almost at the top of the water, his fins lazily working a little.

"Suppose a sailor was to fall overboard," said Nellie, "what would become of him now?"

Dick shrugged his shoulders, saying:

"He'd be in that monster's stomach in about three seconds, by the clock. Look out, Miss Nellie; you're leaning too far over. A sudden roll of the ship——"

His warning came too late.

The ship lurched to the swell of the sea, and then recovered with a quick jerk which set all the standing rigging taut.

And, horror! It threw the girl over the taffrail into the sea, within twenty yards of the monster's jaws.

With an involuntary cry of horror Dick seized the sheath knife from the belt of the sailor at the wheel and sprang into the sea, shouting:

"Courage, Nellie! I'll save you, or we'll both die."

CHAPTER III.

The shark worked its fins lazily.

Sure of its victim, it was, apparently, in no hurry.

The clothing of Nellie floated her.

Dick swam past, saying:

"Courage!"

"Hurrah, Dick!" cried a voice. "You look out for the shark and I'll take care of the girl."

Bob jumped over the taffrail into the sea and, swimming to Nellie, said:

"Never fear. We'll fix things yet."

Dick swam to within ten feet of the shark, which suddenly commenced to show activity.

The young man had heard of the way in which the South Sea Islanders get the best of these monsters, and determined to adopt the same plan.

He was an excellent swimmer and diver.

Of one thing he was satisfied.

The shark could not bite unless it turned over on its back.

Determined to give the terrible fish no chance to do this, Dick dove under it.

The water was so clear that he could see as well as when he was upon the ship.

When under the belly of the monster he drove his knife upward to the hilt three or four times in the shark's flesh.

The water became a sheet of foam, dyed red with the blood of the shark, as it thrashed about in agony.

Dick came up, and drove his knife to the hilt several times in the shark's sides, giving it no chance to turn on its back to make an attack.

Suddenly both disappeared, and when they came up again the monster floated upon the surface of the sea, while Dick came to the surface, blew the water from his mouth like a porpoise and smiled.

"Hurrah!" shouted Bob, who all this time was supporting Nellie, taking it easy, treading water.

The taffrail was crowded with passengers.

When they saw what had happened they shouted with joy, and the women cried for the same reason.

By this time the long boat reached them, and all were taken on board.

Nellie was hoisted up by a rope, which having been thrown down again, Dick and Bob shinned and gained the deck.

They were made lions of by all but the captain, who stood looking at Dick with lowering eyes, both of which were blackened, sincerely wishing that the shark had killed him.

Nellie was taken to her cabin by the ladies, and Dick and Bob went into theirs to change their wet clothes.

While this operation was going on Bob said:

"Look here, Dick."

"Well?"

"Your life's in danger."

"Who'll take it?"

"The captain, if he gets the chance."

"Pshaw!"

"All right, but I tell you to look out. Do you know he's in love with Nellie?"

"No."

"Well, he is, then."

"How do you know?"

"I can see it in every move he makes, and that's the reason why he hates you."

"Let him hate."

"That's all right, if leads to no injury to you."

"Well, we'll watch him. Hello, what's that?"

It was now about two o'clock in the afternoon, and the captain, since the episode at the dinner-table, had not been attending to his business.

The mate had warned him several times that the barometer was falling rapidly, and that sail had been taken in; but the captain had gruffly told him to mind his own business and let the canvas alone. He would have it taken it when it suited him.

The consequence was that a terrific squall struck the ship, with all sail set.

The result was that the schooner was instantly thrown on her beam ends, and lay wallowing in the trough of the sea.

She was not far enough over for any part of her rigging to touch the water, except the booms and the lower part of the sails.

Fortunately, the mate had ordered the matches battened down, or they would have been swamped instantly.

Neither did the cargo shift to leeward, which would have been fatal to them.

Just as Dick and Bob reached the deck the captain shouted:

"Cut the halyards!"

The sailors crawled along the inclined deck like monkeys and drew their sheath-knives across the ropes.

The sails came rattling down.

"Who'll volunteer to go aloft and furl the topsail?"

A dozen men sprang into the rigging to undertake the dangerous job.

It was successfully accomplished.

The schooner, relieved of the vast amount of pressure of the wind against the sails, her heavy keel and the large amount of ballast in her bottom, slowly righted, and she lay wallowing in the trough of the sea, broadside to.

The captain shouted:

"Double-reef the mainsail and take the bonnet out of the standing jib. Furl foresail and mizzen, flying jib and topsail. Make all snug."

The waves were broaching over the schooner as she lay broadside on, but the men worked with a will and soon had all snug.

"Up with the mainsail and standing jib!" roared the captain.

Then, turning to the mate, he continued, when both sails were set:

"Take the wheel and see if she'll pay off."

The ship answered the wheel splendidly.

Around she came, describing a graceful curve as the gale struck her sails, until she was dead before the wind.

"Steady!" shouted the captain.

The wheel was held so, and the schooner dashed off before the wind like an arrow.

Twenty miles must have been run in this way, when the captain approached the mate, who was still at the wheel, and said:

"We're going exactly in the opposite direction to our regular course?"

"Yes."

"If we keep on at this we'll be two hundred miles further out of our course before morning."

"You're right."

"I'll give the order to lay her to."

"I've been thinking of that for some time, sir. I'm afraid this terrible run of seas aft of us will break the rudder."

"I'll give the order."

He shouted through his trumpet:

"Stand by to lay ship to!"

The mate exclaimed, suddenly:

"Hold on, cap'n!"

"What's the matter?"

"There's a ship to leeward, two miles off, masts gone, and apparently water-logged. She's flying signals of distress from the stump of the mizzen-mast. I saw her rise on the top of a wave. Hallo! there she is now!"

"We can do her no good. We can't board her with this sea running."

"We might run down close to her and lay by her until the gale abates."

"Well, we'll do that."

They ran down until within a quarter of a mile of the dismasted ship, when they lay to and watched her.

The schooner now was as easy as a duck upon the sea, rising and falling to the immense seas with scarcely a shock or jar.

Dick had on board a powerful field-glass.

Going to his stateroom, he got it and brought it up on deck. He scrutinized the water-logged ship intently, and was about to put down the glass, when an expression of amazement appeared upon his face.

"Can I be mistaken?" he said to himself.

He looked again, and said: "As sure as I live, it's so."

Hurrying to the captain, he said:

"Captain, there are live persons on that ship."

The skipper growled out:

"Nonsense! She was deserted long ago."

"I tell you I saw a girl looking over the bulwarks."

"And I tell you you didn't."

Dick put his glass to his eye and said:

"She's there now! Look!"

The captain took the glasses, looked and saw that Dick was right.

"It's so," he said.

"What's to be done?"

"Nothing; we can't board her in this weather."

"Can't you send a boat?"

"A boat wouldn't live."

"How long will that ship stay above water?"

"I should say not two hours."

At this juncture Bob came up from the cabin.

Dick called out:

"Hi, Bob, here!"

Bob came up, saying:

"Well, what's the racket?"

"I'm going to ask the captain for the dory."

"What for?"

"There's a girl on board that water-logged ship."

"The deuce you say!"

"I'm going to her, if I can get there."

"I'm with you."

"Captain, will you let us have the dory?"

For a moment the captain turned his back to them and his face assumed the expression of a fiend.

He was satisfied that the dory could not live in such a sea.

It would inevitably fill and capsize, when nothing could save the lives of the crew.

Here, then, was an opportunity of getting rid of Dick, his hated rival, the man who had given him a thrashing before his passengers.

Turning to the young men, he said:

"Are you in earnest?"

"We are."

"I'm bound to tell you that the chances are ten to one against you."

"We'll risk it."

The captain called out:

"Lower the dory!"

It was lowered from the stern of the ship.

The mate, when he understood what was going on, protested.

The captain replied:

"They're bound to go. Let 'em. No interference."

Dick slid down a rope into the dory. Bob followed, the boat was cast loose, and an instant later the little cockle-shell, with its human freight, was in the midst of the rushing, foaming, seething billows.

CHAPTER IV.

To those on the deck of the ship it was a fearful sight to see the dory dancing on the waves in that terrible sea, first leaping high on the crest of a wave and then hidden from sight.

There was no need for Dick and Bob to row, for they were dead before the wind.

All they at present had to do was to keep the dory straight, for the instant it broached to they would inevitably be swamped.

They were not many minutes getting to the ship, for the seas shot them forward like an arrow.

It was impossible to board her on the windward, for the seas would have crushed the dory like an eggshell against the side of the ship.

And it was equally impossible to stop the dory.

They concluded to round the stern of the vessel, and then, by a quick turn of the paddle, shoot the dory to the leeward side of the ship, where the water was comparatively calm.

This maneuver was successfully carried out.

There was a rope hanging down to the water's edge, to which they fastened the dory.

Going on deck, they were confronted by a large dog of the Newfoundland breed.

The dog made the most extravagant expressions of joy.

There was no person on deck.

"You must have been mistaken, Dick," said Bob.

"I tell you I wasn't."

"Well, then, let's go into the cabin."

Pushing open the cabin doors, they entered.

There was water on the cabin floor, showing that the ship had settled far down.

And in the middle of the cabin floor lay a girl, about the age of Nellie, in a dead faint.

Bob ran to her, raised her up and carried her out on deck.

He poured some brandy from his flask between her lips.

She sighed, opened her eyes and said:

"Ah! I thought death had come to me."

"We have come to save you," Bob replied. "Where are the passengers and crew?"

"Gone off in boats. They forgot me."

"The brutes!"

"It wasn't their fault. I have no doubt they thought I was in one of the boats. My name is Alice Lamont, and I was going from New York to Australia to join my parents."

"Come, come," said Dick, impatiently. "This ship is settling—she may go to the bottom at any moment."

"Can you walk, Miss Lamont?" asked Bob.

"Oh, yes."

"Come, then, and we'll get on board the dory."

Dick went down the rope first, and then Bob lowered down Alice, after which he descended.

The dog sprang into the bow of the boat, where he crouched down and looked at them beseechingly, begging them not to put him out.

"It is my dog," said Alice.

That settled it with Bob, who would not then have put the dog out for a fortune.

"Let her go," said Dick.

The rope was cut.

Both jumped to their oars.

Now commenced the tug of war.

It was a fearful struggle, pulling back against the wind and sea.

Sometimes it seemed as if they must be swamped when an immense sea towered above them.

The people on the ship looked on tearfully, with clasped hands and prayerful hearts, never expecting to see the little dory appear upon the crest of a wave again when it sank down into the hollow.

At last they reached the ship and rowed under the stern.

Ropes were thrown to them, and they were soon on deck, including the dog, who was also hoisted up.

All were overjoyed except the captain, who had failed in encompassing Dick's death and only succeeded in giving him more honor.

Alice was taken down into the cabin.

When Nellie saw her she exclaimed:

"Alice Lamont!"

"Nellie Newcome!"

Then there was hugging and kissing, after which Nellie took Alice to her own stateroom, which she declared should be shared with her.

It seemed that Nellie and Alice had attended the same seminary and graduated together.

Alice, however, started for Australia a few days before Nellie, but the ship proved a slower sailer than the schooner, which had overtaken her.

There seemed to be no let-up to the storm.

Day after day it continued.

Bob seized every chance to be in the company of Alice, and so did Hunter, the young friend of the professor.

One day Alice expressed a desire to see the sea.

As the schooner was not laboring much, Bob took her on deck and found a cozy seat for her beside the mainmast.

They were talking earnestly, when Bob discovered Hunter's head peering around the mast.

He was listening.

Bob said nothing, but when Hunter's face was in a favorable position, struck him a back-hander with the back of his hand that laid him flat on the floor and knocked one of his front teeth out.

"Listen again, you sneak," said Bob.

A look of fearful malignity was upon Hunter's face as he got up, spat out his tooth and shook his fist at Bob and hissed:

"I'll get square with you for that!"

"Get out, you sneak, or I'll give you more!"

Hunter shuffled aft and went down into the cabin.

Bob had occasion to remember his threat not many hours afterward.

The gale continued. It became fiercer and fiercer.

At last, one day, about three o'clock in the afternoon, a fearful sea broke down upon the schooner, washing everything movable from the deck.

Two more of the same mountainous billows followed, and the bulwarks were washed away.

The captain shouted:

"Sound the well!"

"Two feet of water in the hold!"

"All hands to the pumps!"

The pumps were manned.

Despite all their efforts, the water gained a little, but very slowly.

Dick and Bob worked at the pumps faithfully.

At midnight the mate said:

"Go to bed, youngsters. She can't fill to-night at this rate, and we'll want your help in the morning."

Dick and Bob went below and turned in.

So tired were they that they did not awake until eight o'clock the following morning.

Bob, who occupied the lower bunk, reached up and shook Dick, saying:

"Come, old man, it's eight o'clock."

He stepped off his bunk upon the floor.

"Hello!" he said, "what's this?"

The floor was covered with water to the depth of two inches, and he could see it bubbling up in little rivulets from the hold.

"Dick!" he shouted. "Dick, the schooner's sinking! Out with you! There's two inches of water on the stateroom floor."

Out of his bunk came Dick like a shot.

Bob cried out:

"Don't stop to dress. Put on your pants, that's all. I'll get the money."

This was soon done.

"Now, out we go," said Bob.

He unlocked the stateroom door and tried to open it. The door was fast.

They threw themselves bodily against the door, but made no impression on it.

Then they sat down and shouted for help.

No one came.

"Dick," said Bob, "they've abandoned the schooner!"

"And left us fastened up."

"Either the captain or Hunter did it. They hate us."

"We're booked for Davy's locker," said Dick. "The ship'll sink in an hour."

"Let's die like men."

"No whining."

Then they grasped each other's hands and with pale faces sat awaiting their death, while the schooner slowly settled farther and farther down.

CHAPTER V.

There is no such terrible feeling as despair.

If we have hope we struggle, but in despair we give up and stolidly await death.

So it was with Dick and Bob. They had sat down, clasped hands and looked at each other in despair.

It was not the despair induced by cowardice, however, but a sense of helplessness.

Dick was the first to speak.

"Dick," he said, "who do you think fastened our door?"

"The captain."

"Why?"

"Because he loves Nellie."

"And thinks you are his rival?"

"That's it."

"How about Hunter."

"Well, he's a snake."

"I shouldn't wonder if he'd fish for Alice Lamont. He'd better not, though, or he'll think a thunderbolt had struck him when I get at him!"

Dick smiled sadly, saying:

"When you get at him, old chap."

This recalled both to a sense of their position. They became silent. Suddenly, as the vessel lurched, the partition to the right of them quivered.

Dick arose on the instant, crying:

"What fools we are! Because we couldn't get out of the door we tried nowhere else. Let's have a try at the partition."

Both threw themselves against the partition, which weakened.

"Once more."

Another dash, and a panel was loosened.

"Again, my hearty!"

At the next trial the panel was broken. They crept through the aperture and found themselves in the next stateroom, the door of which was open.

"Hurrah!" cried Bob.

They waded through the water on the cabin floor to the companionway.

Dick was first. He pushed against the door.

"Sold again," he said.

"What's the matter?"

"The door's locked."

"What's to be done?"

"It's impossible to break it down."

"You're right."

Having escaped from the stateroom, they did not intend to become victims of despair again.

"How about the bulkhead?" Bob asked.

"We'll try it."

"There's a secret door there somewhere, Dick."

"How do you know?"

"I saw the captain open it once, when he thought the cabin staterooms were empty."

If there was a door in the bulkhead, it communicated with the hold, through which they could easily make their way among the boxes, bales and barrels of assorted merchandise which composed the cargo to the main hatch.

Bob, having seen the captain open it, knew best where it was, and searched for it.

He found a spring and pressed upon it. An aperture opened. He cried out heartily:

"Eureka!"

"Good!" said Dick. "You've done it, old man. Now let's make a break."

"We'd better go back into our stateroom and tog up."

This was soon done. Each took a satchel of clothing, and their watches and money. They then went into the hold. Reaching the ladder which went up to the main hatchway, Dick ascended it. He pressed upward and then cried out:

"It's fast!"

"Are you sure?"

"Yes; it's battened down."

"On account of the gale?"

"I suppose so."

"We might have known it. What's to be done?"

"Try the forward bulkhead."

If they could break this down they could get into the forecastle, where the sailors slept.

To effect this by rushing against it was impossible. They commenced to look around for some article to act as a lever, and soon found it.

"Here's a lot of crowbars," Dick sang out.

Each armed himself with one, and in a short time, with the formidable instruments, a hole was opened through the bulkhead.

The instant they stepped through into the forecastle Bob said:

"It's open, by George!"

"We're safe."

"Not yet, Dick. You go out on deck and have a look around, and I'll go back into the cabin."

"What for?"

"Guns."

Bob once more threaded his way among the cargo and reached the cabin.

He and Dick each had a fine breech-loading ten-bore, one barrel of which was rifled for ball and would also shoot shot with some accuracy on occasion.

They also had revolvers.

Getting these, and plenty of ammunition, Bob was about to go back by the way he had come, when Dick opened the cabin door and called out:

"Hello, Bob!"

"Hello it is!"

"Come out this way."

The sight on deck was anything but reassuring.

The gale had abated, but there was still a heavy ground swell on account of it.

There was one boat on deck, a small skiff, carried by the ship for convenience in launching, but a large hole was knocked in the bottom.

"We can fix that," said Dick.

"How?"

"I'll show you."

Dick knew where the carpenter's chest was, and got it.

He then procured a piece of canvas, which he tacked over the

hole. Next he nailed strips of boards on the outside and inside of the boat and caulked with cotton.

A tackle was then rigged to the fore-yard, and the skiff was hoisted over the bulwarks and lowered into the sea.

The ship was settling rapidly.

"Come, come," said Dick. "We must work in a hurry."

"What next?"

"Grub."

The ship was settling rapidly.

They ran down into the cabin and searched the lockers in the captain's cabin, in which they found some canned meats and preserves, also a quantity of brandy. Some salt beef, ready cooked, was found in the cook's galley, also a quantity of sea-biscuit. These were placed on board the skiff, and a keg or two of water.

There was a small sail for the skiff, which was found forward and put into the boat.

The ship was now settling so rapidly that it was deemed unsafe to stop a minute longer.

They got into the skiff and pushed off.

"Look!" said Bob.

The ship surged forward, lifted her bows out of the water, then dipped, with her stern high in the air, and went down.

"Good-by," Dick said, sadly. "Now, Bob, where are we?"

"Heaven only knows."

"Somewhere in the Pacific."

"This ocean's long and wide."

"You're right it is. Well, shall we drift about, or up sail and be off?"

"There's no good staying here."

"That's so."

"And if we keep sailing we may strike land."

The mast was stepped, the sail loosened, and the sprit placed in position.

"Which way?" said Dick.

"Before the wind. What's the good of beating up against it?"

"All right, my hearty."

Off went the boat before the wind, proving a good sailor and making but little water on account of the hole in the bottom.

It is not our intention to minutely describe the voyage of the young men, preferring to take them at once to exciting events, such as the trip in the skiff did not prove.

They kept their course by the sun in the daytime, and in the night by selecting a star, sleeping and steering by turns.

Toward sunset of the fifth day Bob, who was steering, called out:

"Land ho!"

Dick, who was sleeping, sprang up, crying out:

"Where?"

"Yonder to the westward, just in the sheen of the sun."

"You're right."

"We'll eat on dry land to-night."

"Go slow."

"What's the matter?"

"You don't know who's on that piece of land. They may be cannibals for all we know."

"Then we'd better sheer off."

"No; they can't see the skiff this far off."

"That's so."

"We'll lay off here till sunset, and then let her go."

"All right."

The twilight in those latitudes is short, or indeed there is hardly any; consequently, it was dark almost as soon as the sun was down. The night was clear and starlight, and the course was, as usual, kept by a star.

The wind kept well, rather increasing, if anything.

Both kept watch.

About midnight Bob said:

"Here we are, Dick."

A line of coast loomed up ahead.

There were no breakers, nothing but a low surge of the sea against the shore.

Keeping very still, they coasted along until they came to a small cove, into which they ran the skiff, the keel soon grating on the sand.

Nothing was to be seen except a sandy shore fringed with bushes.

Dick, as it was his watch, gave the orders.

"We'll go inland at once," he said.

"All right."

"And we'd better hide this skiff."

"What for?"

"We don't know who's here."

"Who cares?"

"I do. I've no taste for being made cannibal meat."

"Have it your own way."

The skiff was dragged up into the bushes and concealed. The young men made a hearty meal of canned meat and biscuit, took up their guns and started.

When they emerged from the bushes they found that the place was wooded, but between the woods and bushes there was a strip of rocky ground, upon which no vegetation grew.

As they were crossing the sand Dick said:

"Sh! Look there, Bob!"

"What is it?"

"A fire."

"You're right. Let's see who it is."

Bob was walking forward, when Dick said:

"Go slow. They may be pirates or cannibals. Go slow."

"Lead the way yourself, then."

Dick led the way cautiously toward the light that could be seen gleaming through the trees.

Suddenly he said:

"Careful! There's somebody coming."

Both hid behind trees.

There were two men approaching. As they came nearer, and the first one showed himself, Bob whispered:

"There's your cannibal," and then continued, "and a white man."

"Sh—sh! Hunter, as I live!"

CHAPTER VI.

This was a great surprise to them, but not a movement or sound did they make.

Hunter and the savage passed on until they came to a glade, when they sat down.

Dick made a sign to Bob, and they crept up to the edge of the bushes and listened.

Hunter was saying:

"Will you do it?"

The savage, who had in some manner learned English, said brokenly:

"If you'll keep your promise."

"Of course I will. You're to have the boatswain's wife."

"Good."

"Where's your canoe?"

The savage pointed in a direction which would strike the shore about four or five hundred yards from the spot where the young men had hidden their skiff.

"How many men do you say you have?" Hunter continued.

"Twenty."

"That'll do."

They walked off again into the forest.

The young men did not follow.

"The captain and the rest must have come ashore here," said Dick.

"Yes."

"That's their camp yonder."

"I suppose so."

"Let's go and see."

They made their way cautiously to the spot, or so near that they could see the camp.

A fire was lighted, and some sailors were lying around asleep. There were some tents of canvas pitched.

"They're all there," said Bob. "Shall we go in?"

"Not much. We must watch our chance to get the girls."

"Hunter and the cannibals will get the best of us."

"We must look out for that."

"Have you got any plan?"

"Yes."

"What is it?"

"Let's go and steal the canoe of the cannibals. Then they can't get off the island."

"How do you know it's an island?"

"There's no continent in this part of the world."

"Perhaps the cannibals live here."

"Then what are they doing in a canoe? They've come from some other island."

"You're right. Well, I'll obey orders to-night. So go ahead."

Dick led the way to the shore and along it toward the spot to which the cannibal had pointed as indicating the place where the canoe was.

Going cautiously, they saw the canoe, and halted to take observations.

There was no sign that the owners were about.

They had evidently gathered at some point in the woods to wait the return of their head man from his interview with Hunter.

Satisfied that their movements were not observed, they shoved off the canoe, which was so large that it was capable of holding twenty men, without being loaded heavily, or thirty upon a pinch.

"Wait," said Dick.

He pushed the canoe back to shore and commenced loading it with rocks, assisted by Bob.

When they had enough they left the shore and paddled the canoe to the spot where they had landed.

Pulling the skiff out from among the bushes, they secured it to the stern of the canoe by the painter and paddled out to sea.

When far enough from shore, each drew his knife and ripped many holes through the bark of which the canoe was made.

The water gushed in.

They again entered the skiff, and had the satisfaction of seeing the canoe rapidly settle and sink, carried down by the weight of the stones.

The next thing to be done was mentioned by Bob, who said:

"When Hunter finds the canoe is gone, he'll take the imps to the captain's yawl."

"You're right. Let's go and find the yawl."

This was soon done, it being three or four hundred yards in the opposite direction.

Coasting along the shore, they found the spot they wanted for the concealment of the yawl.

This was where the bushes overhung the water so densely that no one from the outside could see an object that was hidden within.

The bushes were opened carefully, the yawl pushed through and fastened, and the skiff taken back and hidden where it was before.

They then went carefully to the captain's camp.

Hunter was just walking across the opening. He disappeared inside a tent.

Inside the tent were three persons, Alice Lamont, Nellie Newcome and the boatswain's wife.

Hunter touched Alice. She sat up instantly and said:

"What are you doing in my tent?"

"Waken the others."

This was done, and when they were all thoroughly awake, Hunter said:

"You remember our conversation?"

"Yes."

"It related to your escape. Well, I have now come to save you."

"How?"

"I have found a cave through which runs a small stream of fresh water. The mouth of the cave is so small that it can be covered with a large stone. I will take you there, where all the sailors on this island cannot find you, and I'll bring you food every day while they are searching for you."

Nellie hesitated. She said at last:

"I don't know what to say."

Hunter shrugged his shoulders and replied:

"Would you rather be the captain's wife, and Alice the wife of the greatest rascal among the sailors?"

"They can't compel us to marry them."

"But they can compel you."

The girls turned pale. Hunter continued:

"To-morrow will be too late."

"How do you know?"

"I overheard a conversation."

"Relate it."

"It was too revolting. Well, what do you say?"

The girls consulted together, and said:

"We will go."

"You must hurry, then. Daylight comes early in these latitudes."

He continued, to the boatswain's wife:

"You must go with them."

"I can't leave my husband."

"He's waiting for us."

"Where?"

"Out in the woods."

"Then I'll go," she replied, unsuspiciously.

Five minutes later they all left the tent and, passing by the sleeping sailors, entered the woods.

Hunter now led the way in a southwesterly direction, saying, as the females stumbled among the underbrush:

"Have patience; we'll soon be there."

Hardly had he spoken when shadowy forms flitted toward them.

Before the girls perceived them they were seized, held tightly, and a black hand placed over each of their mouths.

It was impossible to cry out.

Hunter was nowhere to be seen.

The chief of the party said, as he brandished a hatchet:

"No noise, or you die."

Fearful of death if they disobeyed, all kept quiet and were led down to the beach.

Here Hunter awaited them.

He pointed to the spot where the boat had been, and said: "Gone!"

CHAPTER VII.

The head man of the cannibals looked surprised. With an expression of distrust, he glanced at Hunter and said:

"Where is the boat?"

"How do I know?"

"You got here first. It is a trap you've set for us. You cast the canoe adrift."

He fingered his hatchet nervously. Hunter replied, coolly: "You are mistaken."

The chief, turning to some of his underlings, told them to search for the boat along the shore.

They returned with no success.

The chief was enraged. He drew his hatchet, saying:

"We'll kill you all!"

He raised his hatchet over the head of the boatswain's wife, and was about to strike, when Hunter said:

"Wait until morning. The boat can't drift far. We can swim for it. Hold on—I know a better plan. I know where the boat of my people is. We'll go to that."

The cannibal replaced the hatchet.

"Good!" he said.

He made a signal, and Hunter led the way.

They reached the spot where the yawl should have been. That, too, was gone.

"Destruction!" exclaimed Hunter.

The chief regarded him intently and said:

"Search!"

A thorough search was made along the shore, hundreds of yards each way, where the boat might have drifted, without success.

Hunter was now afraid of his life, and that of the girls.

The chief, however, said no more about using his hatchet, but remarked:

"We will go back."

"To where we left the canoe?"

"Yes."

"And look for it at daylight. One thing is certain—the yawl's gone, and the sailors can't chase us, even if they see us."

The chief nodded, and led the way back to where he had left the canoe, and, concealed in the bushes that fringed the shore, the whole party waited for the return of day.

In the meantime, Dick and Bob had been around.

Concealed in the bushes, they had seen Hunter enter the tent and come out again with the females.

"What d'ye think of that, Bob?"

"It's queer."

"I thought Nellie did not like Hunter, and now she's following as gently as a lamb," said Dick, with some jealousy.

"Let's cut 'em off."

They went off diagonally to the course that was being pursued by Hunter and, concealing themselves behind a tree, waited for him to come up.

The party passed within a few feet of our heroes.

"Let's down Hunter and get the girls," Bob whispered.

Dick hesitated, and then said:

"It won't do. Goodness knows how many niggers are prowling around."

"We'd better try it."

"What's your plan after we get 'em?"

"We'll sink our skiff and take the yawl. They can't follow."

"And starve to death on the sea?"

"We'll have to take our chances."

Notwithstanding the risk of going to sea in the yawl with the limited quantity of provisions that still remained in the skiff, Dick was seriously considering the matter, when the opportunity was taken away by the capture of the party by the cannibals.

The young men followed them as close as they dared and observed everything that was going on.

When the party returned from the unsuccessful search for the yawl and entered the bushes that fringed the shore, Dick and Bob were not far off.

As morning dawned they could see the girls, with the boatswain's wife.

They were not bound, but were so closely guarded as to make escape impossible.

There were now three separate parties on the island, and one only, Dick and Bob, had the means of leaving it.

This, however, they did not intend to do until they could take Alice and Nellie with them.

The two friends had the advantage in another way. They knew of the presence of the other two parties.

The cannibals knew of the presence of the captain's party, but not of Dick and Bob.

The captain was not aware that there was a soul on the island except those who had come with him in the yawl.

Each party was contending for the possession of the females. Hunter and the cannibals had the best of it by right of numbers.

The captain came next, because the seamen, being all armed with muskets, would probably overmatch the cannibals, who were armed with bows, if it came to a fight.

Dick and Bob, being only two, must depend on strategy rather than strength, and it now remained to be seen what two New York young men, thus heavily handicapped, could do.

As soon as it was light enough, the chief of the cannibals and Hunter took a look seaward.

Of course the canoe was not in sight, being at that moment at the bottom of the sea.

Hunter said to the chief:

"We're caught, Walla."

"Yes," the cannibal returned, gloomily.

"What's to be done?"

"Fight," replied Walla, shaking his head.

"We'd better hide."

The cannibal started.

"Good!" he said. "I know of a place. Come on."

To stay where they were was to invite discovery by the captain and the seamen before long.

They started at once. Walla led the way rapidly toward the south, keeping in the forest. After going a mile or so, he came to the center of the island, where there was an extinct volcano, the base of which was surrounded by rocks.

Leading the way among the rocks, the cannibal removed a large stone, disclosing an opening that seemed to lead into the volcano, saying:

"My people have known of this a long time."

He entered, and the girls and the boatswain's wife were forced to do so, followed by Hunter and the cannibals.

Dick and Bob were now, so to speak, "left out in the cold."

They held a consultation. To attack the cannibals in that place was out of the question.

"Dick," said Bob, "there's only one thing to be done."

"What's that?"

"Join our forces with the captain's."

"That won't do."

"Why not?"

"If he gets the girls in his power again, it's good-by to you and me."

"Then what is to be done?"

"I've got a plan that's worth trying. Hallo! Keep close; they're coming out."

The cannibals and Hunter came out of the opening and rolled the stone over the hole.

"We must have food," they heard the chief say.

He waved his hand toward the shore on the opposite side of the island from that where the captain and seamen were.

They then walked away in that direction and disappeared in the forest. When they were out of sight, Dick said:

"How many do you make out there are left inside?"

"Four."

"We can lick 'em."

"We'll have to try."

"There's no use crawling through that hole; they'll have us dead to rights."

"We'll have to."

"Let's try another plan first."

Dick led the way, after concealing the guns, to the top of the hill, keeping concealed as much as possible behind the rocks and shrubbery. There was a crater there, the sides of which were formed of hardened lava.

"I'll tell you my plan," said Dick. "In my opinion, the opening the niggers went into communicates with the crater. Let's see."

They commenced the descent, which was difficult, and at the depth of a hundred feet reached a ledge.

"Look!" said Dick.

Just above the ledge an opening appeared.

"We'll go in," said Bob.

"That's my intention."

The opening was so small that they had to get down on their hands and knees, but, once inside, it enlarged. Presently it was so large that they could stand upright and walk with ease.

At the end of fifty feet Dick said, in a whisper:

"Thunder!"

"What's the matter?"

"I've fetched up. We're at the end of the passage."

"There's a ray of light."

"You're right."

It was an aperture extending entirely across the bulkhead at the end of the passage. They looked through the aperture, and in a circular apartment beyond saw the prisoners. Alice and Nellie were sitting on the floor, looking the very picture of despair. The boatswain's wife was sitting a yard or so away, apparently in deep thought. Four cannibals were squatting on their haunches near the entrance.

As the young men pressed against the bulkhead they felt it slightly move.

"Dick!" whispered Bob.

"Well?"

"This is only a loose rock, and it leans so far that way that we can easily upset it."

"Good!"

"Have your pistols ready, and put your shoulder against the rock."

"It's there."

"Remember, they're four to two."

"We'll lick 'em."

"Are you ready?"

"Yes."

"Then push—tumble over the rock—go in tooth and nail, and give the niggers fits! Ready, Dick—now!"

CHAPTER VIII.

"Hold!" whispered Dick.

This word was spoken before they had thrown the whole weight of their bodies against the stone that barred the passage.

"What's the matter?" whispered Bob.

"Look into the cave."

A glance showed that the attempt to upset the stone would have to be deferred. Through the main passage appeared, one after the other, several men, among whom was Hunter.

Had Dick and Bob succeeded in getting into the cave they would instantly have been overpowered and captured beyond a doubt. What was to be done?

"Keep still," said Dick.

"I hate that, when the girls are so near."

"We might have a try at 'em."

"And lose our heads. It won't do."

"What's to be done?"

"Stay here and watch our chance."

Hunter was saying:

"What a fool that Walla is! Confound him! I shouldn't wonder if he brought the captain and crew down upon us like a nest of hornets."

One of the cannibals, who could speak a little English, said:

"What's the matter?"

"The sailors are out scouting already. We saw them, and I think they saw us. We never ought to have left the cave, except in the night, to go to the seashore."

"Where's Walla?"

"He's scouting around, watching the sailors. It'll end in our being tracked to this place yet."

"And suppose it does?" said Nellie Newcome.

"We'll be captured again by the captain."

"You've nothing to fear."

"But you have."

Here Alice Lamont spoke up, saying:

"We would as soon be in his power as in yours, Mr. Hunter."

"You've changed your tune lately," Hunter replied.

"We've had reason to."

"I don't see why you should fear me. Haven't I done as I agreed to?"

"You've done too much."

"How's that?"

"You betrayed us to the cannibals."

"Pshaw! they surprised us."

"Do you mean to say you hadn't seen the cannibals before they made us prisoners?"

"Certainly I had not."

"How came you to be such good friends with them, then, all of a sudden?"

"That's a hard one," whispered Bob. "I wonder what reply the whale'll make to that?"

Hunter replied, quietly:

"If I had not made friends with them, you would have been murdered and eaten."

"Well, you were quick about it."

"I had to be. You mustn't let the grass grow under your feet when there's danger."

"Look here, Mr. Hunter," said the boatswain's wife, "I thought you said my husband knew we were going to run away from the captain."

"He did."

"He was to meet us, though, according to your account. How is it he did not?"

"How do I know?" said Hunter, snappishly. "He missed his way, probably."

"He won't miss his clutch on your throat when he gets a chance at you, you rascal."

Hunter said nothing. The idea of a fight with the boatswain did not appear to set well on his mind.

Before anything else could be said, Walla and his cannibals came through the entrance. The features of the cannibal chief were impassive, and nothing could be learned from them.

Dick was about to say something, when the report of a musket was heard on the outside.

"Hallo!" Bob whispered. "The sailors are here. Now, Dick, we're between two fires."

"That's a fact."

"Well, we'll lay low."

A cannibal, bleeding from a wound in the arm, came through the passage. He spoke to Walla in a language the young men could not understand.

Hunter, who had turned pale at the report of the musket, asked:

"What's happened?"

"One of the seamen chased this fellow to the cave and shot at him," replied Walla.

"Then our hiding-place is discovered?"

"It is," the cannibal replied grimly.

At this moment Alice said:

"Hunter, if the sailors are outside, we prefer to go to them."

"And put yourself in the power of the captain?"

"The seamen will protect us, if it is necessary."

"I can't allow it," said Hunter, shaking his head. "I won't allow you to sacrifice yourselves. However, there's no use hurrying. The captain will be sneaking around here pretty soon, and then we can see what's to be done."

"Dick," said Bob, "there's no use staying here; we can't hear anything that's going on. Let's get out to the top of the crater and take a squint around."

"There's no use charging the beggars now."

"No, they're too many for us."

"Well, cut ahead."

In a few minutes they had worked their way to the top of the crater. They flung themselves on the top, behind the rocks, and could see neither cannibals nor seamen.

For an hour all was silence, then Dick said:

"There they come."

"Who?"

"The sailors."

The captain was ahead. They, piloted by the sailor who had discovered the cannibal and, having shot at him, had chased him into his hiding-place, came close to the mouth of the cavern and halted.

"How we could riddle the beggars if we had a gun loaded with buckshot," said Bob, looking down upon them.

"That won't do."

"Of course not. Besides, our guns are in the bushes."

"We must get 'em."

"That can't be done before night."

"Hark! They're going to hold a palaver."

The captain sang out:

"Hallo! you devils in there."

There was no reply.

"Give 'em a gun," said the captain.

"What's the good? There's a stone against the hole," said the sailor who had winged the cannibal.

"Go pull it away."

The sailor hesitated. Then, wishing to show his pluck, he walked to the stone and, with a quick jerk, slung it away from the hole and sent it rolling through the bushes.

* "Hurrah!" shouted the sailor.

His triumph was cut short by the flight of an arrow which struck him in the shoulder and remained sticking there, chang-

ing his victorious cry to one of pain. He came running to the crowd, crying out:

"I'm done for!"

"Fire into the hole!" shouted the captain.

Several muskets were discharged, but there were no cries from the inside, and probably they did no execution.

The professor, who was with the party, called the sailor to him and, cutting out the arrowhead, bandaged the wound, saying:

"You're all right, my man, unless the arrow is poisoned."

"And suppose it is?"

"Then you'll swell up and—"

"And what?"

"Bust," said a sailor.

"I shouldn't wonder if they had a tremendous tussle," said Dick.

"Who'll get the best of it?"

"The captain's folks, most likely. They're armed with muskets."

"Then they'll have the girls instead of the cannibals. I'll tell you, we'll not gain much."

"Hush! The captain's going to try it."

The captain went close to the hole and called out:

"Hallo, there, you bloody cannibals!"

Walla's voice was heard crying out:

"What do you want?"

"The gals."

"Well, they're not here."

"You're a liar!"

"You'd better look out, or you'll get an arrow put through you."

"You'll get your throats cut—you and your thieves."

"Get at us first."

Here Hunter took up the conversation. He called out:

"Hey, captain!"

"Hallo! you're there, eh?"

"I'm a prisoner."

"That's all in my eye, you lubber!"

"It's a fact. Can't you and the cannibals compromise?"

CHAPTER IX.

The captain exclaimed, savagely:

"What do you mean?"

"Go thirds."

"That's indefinite."

"You take Nellie, I'll take Alice, and Walla the bo'sun's wife."

Dick and Bob saw the captain start, as if the disposition of the case had not struck him in that light before. He was deep in thought for a minute.

"What do you say?" asked Hunter.

"I'll do it."

Hunter turned to the chief of the cannibals and said:

"How does than suit you?"

"I don't know."

"It'll save fighting, and the sailors will lick us out of our boots."

"My men can fight."

"But they can't fight successfully against muskets. What's the matter with you? You'll get all that was in the bargain, and that was the boatswain's wife."

"Alice is pretty."

"Well, you can't have her. She's soke for by me."

The chief nodded, saying:

"Will the captain keep his word?"

"He will, especially as he'll get all he wants, and that's Nellie."

"Let the girl go," said Walla.

Nellie had heard all the conversation, and heard herself, therefore, thus handed over to the mercy of the captain, without consulting her inclinations. Had it not been for Alice and the boatswain's wife, she would not have particularly objected to the change, for she would rather trust to the sailors than the cannibals; but what would become of them? There would be no one to rescue them from their horrible captivity.

Hunter approached Nellie, saying:

"Come, you must go."

"I prefer to remain with my friends."

"The cannibals?"

"No; Alice and the boatswain's wife. We'll all go together, or we'll all stay here."

"Humph!"

Hunter thought a moment as this new phase of the case

presented itself. Wouldn't it be better, after all, if he were to take Alice and also go with the sailors? A moment's reflection, however, decided him to stay where he was, because it was possible that the seamen would break away from the captain's control and rescue Alice, being moved by her entreaties; and he knew that some of the men sympathized with the women. He therefore said:

"You must go alone, and afterward we'll see what is best to be done with the others."

"I will not go," said the girl, firmly, seating herself beside Alice.

Hunter laughed and said:

"We'll see about it. Walla, you can now play your part. You know what to do."

The cannibal chief signed to his men, one of whom advanced and seized Nellie, dragging her toward the entrance, while others held Alice and the boatswain's wife.

Despite her struggles and entreaties, Nellie was dragged to the passage. She was forced through at the point of a spear, receiving a slight wound in her shoulder.

The instant she appeared the captain saw her. He ran forward, exclaiming:

"Hallo, gadabout! You've concluded to come back, have you?"

He seized her by the arms.

"Don't touch me!" she cried out.

"Ho! ho! Don't touch you! Well, that's a good one. Don't you belong to me now?"

"You have no control over me, sir."

"I haven't, eh? Come now, that's clever. You don't know anything about shipping rules, my dear. When you entered my ship I was expected to take charge of you until I delivered you to your mother, and I expect to do it."

"Will you deliver me to my parents?" the girl asked, with a flush of hope.

"Yes, as my wife."

"I'll never be that, sir."

"We'll see."

"I'll die first."

"I guess not. The question of death don't come in."

Dick and Bob heard all that passed outside of the cavern. As the last sentence escaped the captain's lips, Dick exclaimed hotly:

"The rascal! I'll have a shot at him if I'm made mincemeat of in a second."

He pulled out his pistol and was cocking it, when Bob caught his arm and whispered:

"Put up your pistol—you'll spoil everything."

"Do you suppose I'll have him talk to her like that?"

"You won't have to submit to it long. We'll get her out of his clutches. They don't know we're on the island, and we've got the best of 'em that way. If you fire the pistol, it will let both sides know there's another party. They'll hunt us, and what chance will we have then?"

Dick put up his pistol, but his look was lowering, and it was plain to be seen that he could not endure many scenes of the like nature.

The two friends resumed their watching.

After the last remark of the captain Nellie had remained quiet. A deep blush suffused her face, and then it assumed an expression of fear. She looked at the professor, who returned the glance with one of sympathy, but said nothing. The captain continued gruffly:

"Come, we've got all we came for—let's go."

"What's that?" exclaimed the boatswain.

"I say we've got all we came for."

"I say we hain't."

"What's wanting?"

"My wife."

"She's nothing to me."

"She is to me. Do ye suppose I'm going to leave her in the hands of them devils?"

"Well, then, go and get her."

"Won't you help?"

The captain shook his head, and said:

"Not now. Come along, bo'sun, and we'll see what can be done when we get back to camp."

"I'll stay."

"Well, then, give me your gun."

"Not much," said the boatswain firmly.

He walked off into the bushes.

The captain seized him at the edge of them, shouting:

"Mutiny!"

"Let go!" growled the boatswain. "Ye won't, ye son of a

sea-cook! Ye born fiend, that'll trade another man's wife off with a nigger!"

Dropping his musket, the boatswain closed with the captain, and a struggle ensued, resulting in the fall of the skipper, with the sailor on top.

Wild with rage and the agony of having his wife in the hands of a cannibal, the boatswain raised his fist and struck the captain between the eyes.

The blood flowed.

Another blow, and the skipper lost one of his teeth.

The boatswain would have pounded him to a jelly had not two or three of the seamen, in obedience to his cries of help, pulled his assailant off.

As quick as a flash the captain drew a pistol, pointed and discharged it at the boatswain, crying out:

"You scoundrel! You'll assault your captain, will you? Then die, you dog!"

CHAPTER X.

This time it was Bob, upon the hill, who was in for fight over the scene being enacted down below, for he drew his pistol and cried out:

"I'll plug that skipper, if I die for it!"

Dick caught his arm, saying:

"Down! down! The boatswain ain't hurt."

Perceiving that he spoke truly, Bob sank down behind the rock, and the friends were once more hidden.

Fortunately, the fracas down below had kept the eyes of all turned in that direction, or the young men would have been discovered. As it was, no damage was done.

The boatswain was not touched by the bullet from the pistol of the captain.

The professor had saved him by striking the captain's arm at the instant of firing.

The captain, casting upon the professor a terrible look, exclaimed:

"What business have you to interfere?"

"To prevent murder."

"I'll do it yet."

But the boatswain had now something to say with regard to that. He had reached down and picked up his musket, and now held it at full cock, with the muzzle pointing at the skipper's head.

"Go slow," he said. "I've given you a lesson in the shape of a black eye and a bloody nose. If you raise that shooter ye'll get a bullet through yer black heart as sure as my name's Bill Brisket."

The captain turned pale, knowing that the boatswain was a determined man and would do as he said.

"Don't shoot, Brisket," said the professor.

"No more I won't, professor, if the crab lets me alone."

With these words the boatswain backed off, keeping his eye on the captain and his musket ready, until he reached the bushes, which he entered and disappeared.

No sooner was he gone than the captain turned upon the professor and cursed him roundly. The professor bore it meekly, making no reply.

The captain then gave orders, and they all went back to camp, the professor following meekly, walking not far from Nellie.

"Dick," said Bob, when they were out of sight, "what's to be done next?"

"Get out of this."

"What for?"

"To find the bos'un."

"You're right. He'll make one more."

"Fights like a tiger. Didn't he haze that skipper when he got his fingers on him?"

"Well, he did. Come, let's go down and try to find the boatswain."

They descended the side of the hill which was opposite to the opening that led into the cave so as to put the whole body of earth between them and any cannibal who might be looking out.

Reaching the bushes safely, they found their guns and were ready for the warm work which must soon come if they expected to rescue the females.

Where to find the boatswain was now the question, and it was very important, for he was a strong, brave man, willing to fight to the death, and well armed.

They concluded to go around opposite to the opening that led to the cave, and did so very quietly, for they did not know how many cannibals might now be loitering on the outside, being relieved from the fear of the captain and crew.

"There he is," said Dick, "in the thicket there—behind a

log. He's looking toward the entrance and, as sure as I live, he's got his musket pointed, ready to shoot the first nigger that shows up."

"That won't do."

"You're right it won't. We must put a stop to that game."

Creeping softly to the boatswain, Dick touched him on the shoulder. The boatswain sprang up on the instant, saying:

"Hands off!"

An instant later he exclaimed:

"Great heavens! the dead's alive!"

"Guess not, Bill; we've never been dead yet. What are you doing here?"

"Waiting to plug the first rascal that shows himself, and Hunter first of all. You see, there's been—"

"Yes, yes; I know all about it. You mustn't do that. We must take 'em by surprise, if at all. Come back into the woods a little farther."

Going back a hundred yards or so, they took shelter in a thicket, where the young men made the boatswain acquainted with the manner of their escape from the sinking ship.

He also related how they came to be left. The captain had said everybody was in the boat. The ship did not look likely to swim five minutes. When the boatswain discovered that Dick and Bob were not on board the boat it was nearly morning. They then thought the ship must have sunk long ago, and in the morning nothing was to be seen, for the boat had been scudding fast, with a fair wind.

"Now," concluded the boatswain, "we've got to go to work. Them women folks must be rescued. The question is, how is it to be done?"

"Nothing can be done before night."

"But suppose we get 'em, we won't be much better off."

"Why not?"

"'Cause there's no boat on the island."

"You're mistaken; there's two."

Dick then made the boatswain acquainted with the disposition that had been made of the yawl and also the position of the skiff.

"Good!" said the boatswain, rubbing his hands. "You've done well, you youngsters have."

"We're no kittens. I say, Bill, have you got any grub about you?"

"Nary a bite."

"Well, we must have some. We're nearly starved. There's some in the skiff."

They went to the skiff, and having eaten, put some in their pockets. Then they retired to the woods to consult as to their next step.

An open attack must not be tried except as a last resort, for the cannibals were too many for them.

"I have a plan," said Bob, at last.

"What is it?"

For answer Bob stripped and went to a small mud-puddle which they had just crossed. The mud was a dark-brown color, similar to the skin of the cannibals.

He daubed this all over his body and face.

Then he dipped his shirt in the mud, cleaned off all he could, and wrapped it around his loins.

"How's that?" he said. "Ain't I a pretty good cannibal?"

They laughed at his ridiculous figure, but he was, after all, a pretty good imitation of the cannibal.

"What's that all for?" asked Dick.

"Don't you see?"

"Well, I don't."

"I'm going to play cannibal."

"They'll see the fraud in a minute."

"Not in the dark."

"Humph!"

"Fact is," said Bob, "I'm going to visit their den to-night, and bring those women folks out of there, if it is possible."

They tried to dissuade him from such a foolhardy and perilous attempt, but he stoutly persisted that there was reason in it, and that it offered a chance of success.

Finding that he was determined, they gave it up, and put some finishing touches to his disguise.

Midnight was the hour chosen. At that hour they went stealthily to the edge of the bushes opposite the entrance to the cavern.

"Be careful, Bob," said Dick, anxiously.

"If you're caught, shout out, and we'll be with you in a minute."

Bob nodded. The next minute he was out among the broken rocks, walking toward the entrance of the cavern.

CHAPTER XI.

When Bob reached the entrance to the cavern he paused a while and listened. Not a sound could be heard. It was a very hazardous undertaking on which he had gone. If he was discovered it would be almost impossible for his friends, Dick and the boatswain, to arrive quickly enough to save him from death.

Bob crouched down and went into the opening, crawling along it.

There was no cannibal on guard, probably because the arrangement had been made with the captain, and they had no idea that there was any danger.

Bob crept around noiselessly until he reached the cavern, and then, still lying down in the darkness of the passage, looked ahead.

His eyes had by this time become accustomed to the gloom, and he could distinguish objects dimly.

Many objects, which he made out to be human beings, were lying on the floor. Bob looked for the females, but could not distinguish them on account of the gloom.

He now had the most difficult part of his task to perform—that is to say, he must go among the cannibals and search for Alice.

Bob made up his mind not to creep while he was upon this dangerous mission. He arose, and, relying on his disguise, walked boldly among the recumbent forms.

The moment he stepped forth he came near making a fatal error. An arm of one of the cannibals was thrust out, which Bob did not see.

He trod upon it.

The cannibal grunted and sat upright.

Instantly Bob lay down, and the savage uttered an anathema in his own language.

Bob made no reply, but lay still, and a moment later the heavy breathing of the cannibal announced that he slept.

Then Bob arose and continued his excursion, next coming across Hunter, who, in the midst of the cannibals, was sleeping quietly.

He looked at the rascal and thought:

"You rascal, how I'd like to have it out with you!"

As that would not do at that juncture, Bob went on through the piles of recumbent forms.

"Ah!" he said, softly, "at last."

He saw the boatswain's wife through the deep gloom, and beside her was Alice, not sleeping, but sitting upright, her back leaning against the wall.

The blood of Bob coursed swiftly through his veins as he saw them. He paused a moment, looking at them, and then said to himself:

"They'll never come through this string of cannibals without waking them up, and if they do, all's lost."

But all the same, he went on until he reached the females and touched Alice on the shoulder.

She shuddered and said:

"Don't touch me, cannibal!"

"Alice!" he said, aloud.

"Oh!" she said, in a whisper. "Who is it that speaks to me? You are a cannibal."

"No, no!"

"Who, then, are you?"

"Bob."

"Oh, heavens!"

"It's so. Dick and I escaped. There's no time to explain. Come with me."

A look of joy overspread the face of the fair girl. But she said:

"My friend must come with me."

"Whom?"

"The boatswain's wife."

"Oh, yes! Come, I can't reach you. There's no time to lose. Hurry!"

The conversation had been carried on in a whisper. Not one of the cannibals had been aroused. Alice reached down and touched the boatswain's wife, who opened her eyes on the instant. She looked around in bewilderment, and then said:

"I was dreaming."

"No, no," said Alice. "Awake, awake!"

The boatswain's wife opened her eyes again and looked around curiously.

"Follow me," Alice whispered.

Hardly knowing what she did, the woman arose upon her feet and followed the girl, who led the way, piloted by Bob, who said:

"Step where I step. If you touch one of the heathens, we're gone beyond hope."

They were very careful; they walked along carefully, and reached the entrance.

"Alice," said Bob, "you must have great nerve going through here."

"I've got it."

"If you fall over any of these projections and make a noise, we're gone."

"Have no fear for me."

The boatswain's wife said nothing, but she made a misstep.

Hardly had she got half-way through the passage, when her foot touched a rock.

Down she went, and cried out:

"Oh!"

"Run!" cried Bob.

As fast as they could they ran through the passage and gained the outside.

The noise had been heard by Hunter and Walla. They sprang up and looked around.

"What was that?" Walla asked.

"Nothing, I guess," responded Hunter, sleepily.

The cannibal chief groped around to where the females had been and said:

"They're not here."

"Whom?"

"The two women."

Hunter had some matches in his pocket. He struck one and looked around.

"Gone!" he exclaimed.

Walla uttered a whoop which awoke all the cannibals on the instant.

In a moment more all were in motion and, pouring out at the outlet of the cave, peered around in every direction for glances of the fugitives.

In the meantime, Bob had hurried forward, after that exclamation of the boatswain's wife.

He knew that there was no use of further concealment, and away he went, almost dragging Alice, not caring now how much noise he made, and followed by the boatswain's wife.

Reaching the bushes, he saw Dick and the boatswain. The boatswain caught his wife around the waist and said:

"Hurrah, Sally!"

"Shut your mouth, fool!" said Bob, angrily. "The niggers are after us. Run!"

This was enough. Away they went. The night was so dark that, underneath the trees, they could not see one another more than a few feet away.

Hunter's voice at the mouth of the cave was heard, shouting:

"After them, my lads! they can't be far off."

Then came Walla's deep tone:

"Shut up, you fool. Do you want to let them know all our plans?"

Then all was silent in the direction of the cave.

"Which way shall we go?" the boatswain asked.

Bob, who would have given his life to keep Alice, now that he had rescued her, exclaimed:

"Anywhere—hide!"

Away went the boatswain, taking his wife away, seeking a hiding-place.

"Run, Bob, run!" whispered Dick.

"We've got guns—let's fight 'em!"

"It won't do. Scoot!"

They dashed forward through the bushes. On they went for a quarter of a mile or so, not being able to keep a straight course, the light form of Alice being like lead on the arm of Bob, who stopped and said:

"Dick, what shall we do?"

There was no answer.

"Dick!" called Bob, louder.

Still no reply, and the young man said:

"He's lost us."

"Oh, I am so tired!" Alice replied gaspingly.

"Can you go no further?"

"No."

"Well, it makes little difference. I don't know where to go."

"Bob, how did you get here?"

"In the ship's skiff."

"And happened to be cast ashore on this island?"

"Yes."

"It is the hand of Providence."

"You're right," said Bob, doubtfully, and in what seemed to the girl to be a sacrilegious manner. "But the grub lasted, you see, and we happened to strike the right breeze of wind."

"Hush, Bob!"

"What is it?"

"A noise."

Bob listened.

"The cannibals," he whispered. "Come, Alice, let's creep through the underbrush."

"They're all around us."

At that instant, and as Bob was listening intently, the voice of Hunter was heard saying:

"We've got 'em, Walla! Order your men to close in around 'em."

CHAPTER XII.

To fight the cannibals alone would have been foolhardy. But to escape was the question.

"Oh, Bob, we're lost!" Alice whispered, fearfully.

The young man cocked his gun.

"You won't be captured until I die," he said, through his clenched teeth.

"Go, Bob, and leave me!"

"Never!"

"They won't kill me," she wailed. "But they will surely take your life."

"Let 'em."

And now, Bob, under the excitement of the moment, performed a foolish action. Hunter's voice was heard saying:

"Now rush out upon 'em!"

Bang!

Bob's gun spoke. He discharged the right-hand barrel, which was loaded with swan-shot, into the bushes in the direction of the voice.

A chorus of yells were heard.

Several were undoubtedly hit, but Hunter's cry could not be distinguished among them.

For a moment all was still.

But Bob improved the opportunity which was offered when the commotion was going on.

The cannibals all rushed toward the place where the yells and groans had been heard.

"Now's our time," said Bob.

"Go, go!" cried Alice.

"And you'll go, too. Now, come along, Alice, and no nonsense."

Not taking no for an answer from the generous girl who wished him to save himself and leave her to her fate, the brave youth caught her up and ran with her into the edge of the woods. Then, putting her down, he whispered:

"Keep close hold of my hand."

"Where are you going?"

"Anywhere to escape those bloodhounds."

"Oh, if the boatswain and Dick were only here!"

"They'll find us. Hark! wasn't that a step?"

"I hear nothing."

"You can almost hear the silence. Come."

He led her softly away.

They had gone perhaps a quarter of a mile, when Bob suddenly stopped and said:

"As sure as we're here there's some one following us."

"Are you sure?"

"As sure as I live."

As Bob said this he whispered:

"Get behind the tree, then."

He spoke authoritatively. Alice had learned, by this time, to obey without question, when he spoke in that manner, and concealed herself behind the tree, which she dimly distinguished in the darkness.

Bob crouched down.

For a moment more no sound was heard, and then there was a snapping of a dry stick.

It was now certain that something that had life was approaching. It might be an animal or a cannibal.

Bob waited for it to approach.

"Ah!" he said to himself, in a moment.

It was a cannibal, and Bob, perceiving that discovery must ensue, nerved himself to meet it.

In the dim light he saw the cannibal.

He was coming along, half bent, as though suspicious, but did not appear from his actions to think there was any danger.

Of course he could not, in the darkness of the forest, see the trail, but he had separated from the rest of the band and happened to come to the spot.

Bob, who was in a bunch of grass, watched the cannibal, who

could not see him, no matter how sharp his eyes might be, for he was in the shadow.

He gathered himself for a spring, for he did not dare fire off his gun, because the report would be heard by Hunter and the cannibals and bring them to the spot.

When the cannibal came near enough, Bob made his spring.

It was a true one, for he went just far enough to catch the man by the throat, overpowering him, dashing him to the earth and throttling him before he could utter a cry.

Bob held on.

He had taken the savage by surprise, and had entirely the best of him.

He would have undoubtedly choked him to death if his arm had not suddenly been caught from behind and a voice said:

"Shed no blood!"

Bob looked up and saw Alice standing over him. He said, pantingly:

"He must die, to insure your safety."

"Don't kill him, Bob."

"What'll we do with him?"

"Tie him up."

"Where's your rope?"

The girl had a sash around her waist; she took it off and handed it to Bob, saying:

"That will do."

Bob loosed his grip on the cannibal's throat. The fellow lay still, for he had already been choked into insensibility. Alice said:

"Oh, you've killed him."

Bob replied quietly:

"Not I. These beggars require a mighty sight of choking before they slip their wind."

He tied the hands and feet of the cannibal securely, cutting the sash in half to accomplish his purpose.

"Come, now," said Alice.

"Not yet; I've got more to do to this beggar yet."

"What is it?"

"I'll show you."

Bob took his handkerchief and stuffed it into the fellow's mouth.

"There!" he said. "He won't be likely to give the alarm soon, anyway. I guess it was better to do that than to kill the beggar."

"It's always best to avoid the shedding of blood," said Alice.

"Bosh!"

The instant the young man uttered this word he regretted it, and he hastened to correct himself, saying:

"I mean that it was an imprudence to spare his life, because he will tell his comrades, when they discover him, where we've gone."

The girl said, apologetically:

"I can't bear to see human life taken, Bob."

"Well, it's all right. Now we must be off again."

"We can't leave the island," she replied, despairingly.

"Well, then, we can stay."

"They'll find us, no matter where we go."

"Don't croak, but come on," said Bob.

He was quietly asserting his authority. Alice submitted, and they went on, almost at a run.

Suddenly they left the woods and found themselves ascending the rocks.

"Good!" said Bob. "The higher we are up the better we are off."

They went up to the top of the hill. When on its ridge, Bob uttered an exclamation.

"Here's a go!" he muttered.

"What's the matter?"

"We're just where we started from."

"Where's that?"

"On the hill, above the cavern."

"Are you sure?"

"Of course. We're right at the edge of the crater."

"What is to be done?"

"We'd better stay."

They sat down on a rock, and thought there was no danger of any one seeing them from below.

Suddenly a voice called out:

"Hallo, up there! Come down, Bob."

CHAPTER XIII.

Both started to their feet.

"Heavens!" exclaimed the girl. "It's Hunter. Don't let me again fall into his hands."

Bob gently forced her back upon the rock, saying:

"Don't be afraid: maybe it's Dick."

The voice came up again:

"Hallo, there, Bob?"

"What's wanted?"

"Come down."

"Guess not. Is that you, Hunter?"

"Yes."

"Well, you'd better make yourself scarce. If you don't, you'll get a load of buckshot."

"Don't shoot, Bob; I've been true all along. Can't you trust me?"

"Not much."

"Don't trust Hunter," said Alice, tremblingly. "He will do everything but what he says."

"Don't fret. I know the fellow."

"I'll come up to you," said Hunter from below.

"You'd better not."

"Look here, Bob. I'm trying to escape from those rascally cannibals, and you and I both can whip 'em."

"Pshaw!"

"I mean we can keep 'em from coming up the hill."

Bob considered. He did not mean to trust Hunter, by any means, but he wanted to see what he would say when he got to close quarters. So he said:

"Come up, old man."

"Won't you shoot?"

"No."

Hunter advanced, and at the same instant Bob, through the gloom, saw shadowy forms moving through the bushes.

He called out to Hunter:

"Hey! Keep your niggers back."

"They ain't here."

"You lie, you sneak!"

Bob raised his gun and fired. The shell was loaded with buckshot, which went shrieking among the cannibals, hitting several and inflicting flesh wounds, but killing none.

They all scrambled back into the bushes. Bob shoved another shell into his breech-loader.

Hunter had paused in indecision. The shot had gone over his head, and he was not injured.

Bob exclaimed:

"Come on, Hunter! A brave man like you shouldn't be discouraged by a buckshot or two."

Hunter came on up the hill.

When he arrived Bob was seated beside Alice on the stone. Hunter saw them there, a little closer together than he liked. He had always hated Dick and Bob, and now certainly hated one of them, at least, worse than ever.

He came up confidently enough, however, and, addressing Bob, said:

"I see you're alive."

"Yes; but it's through no good-will of yours."

"Oh, that was the captain's fault."

"How was that?"

"He said you were in the yawl."

This tallied with the statement of the boatswain, but Bob did not believe it, for all that. He thought that the boatswain was innocent, but that Hunter would have liked it if he and Dick had gone to the bottom with the sinking ship. He replied:

"Well, Hunter, what do you want?"

"Alice."

"No, no!" cried the girl.

"You hear?" said Bob.

"I suppose I ought to accept my fate."

"You must!"

Hunter drew himself up.

"Must!" he exclaimed. "There's no such word as that in my vocabulary."

Bob shrugged his shoulders.

"There will have to be," he said. "Now, look here, Hunter, I've let you come up here only to say to you that I'm going to fight for this girl until I die. And if you and your heathen cannibals interfere, down you go."

"Do you class me with them?"

"Certainly I do. You're birds of a feather."

Hunter, who had been sitting down, arose suddenly and, in the darkness, drew a pistol from his pocket. Pointing it at Bob, he pulled the trigger. Had it gone off, Bob would have been no longer in the land of the living. But the cap exploded, and the powder in the tube—for Hunter carried one of the old-fashioned Colt's revolvers—had become dampened, so that there was, as the old hunters would have called it in the time of the Revolution, a flash in the pan.

Instantly Bob was on his feet.

A second later his fist shot out and struck Hunter between the eyes. He saw stars and fell.

Bob was upon him in an instant, and here again Alice saved a life. She caught him by the arm and exclaimed, entreatingly:

"Don't! Oh, don't, dear Bob!"

He arose and said:

"Hunter, I release you on her account, because she pleaded for you; but I warn you, don't come into my power again, or it will go hard with you."

Could Bob have seen the expression of Hunter's features in the darkness, it is doubtful if he would have been so willing to let him off so easily; but he now had given his word, and would abide by it.

Hunter could see only the form of Alice outlined against the rock in the darkness, and not her features. But he knew that it was she, and said:

"Alice, if you would save your life, you had better go with me."

"Never!"

"This hill is surrounded. The cannibals will soon attack, and I will be powerless to stay them."

"Well," said the courageous girl, "what will happen then?"

"You will be killed; and, worse than that—"

He hesitated.

"Well, what then?"

"They will eat you, for they are cannibals—man-eaters. Your bones will be picked clean."

"That won't hurt me after I'm dead."

"That's the talk!" cried Bob. "Alice, you've got pluck, by Jove!"

"Let them eat me, if they choose. I prefer that to going with Hunter."

"You shall die, Bob Myers, and I'll see the cannibals pick your bones!" Hunter cried out, loudly.

"Don't be too sure of that, Hunter."

"And I'll see you die; and Alice shall stand by and see your dying agony and hear you blaspheme amid your dying groans."

Bob's patience, even when Alice was looking on—if seeing shadow forms in the darkness can be called that—was about exhausted. He said loudly:

"You skip. Get down the hill."

"I'll go—but I'll return."

"To die!"

"To kill you, and get the girl, who shall yet be my wife."

This was too much. Bob rushed at Hunter, clinched with him, and threw him headlong down the hill.

"You've killed him," said Alice, fearfully.

"No such good luck."

"You hate him."

"Why shouldn't I?"

The pure girl, who did not know the evil that there is in this wicked world of ours, exclaimed:

"Oh, Bob! you shouldn't—"

"Hark!"

"What is it, Bob?"

"They're coming! Down, Alice, down! Get behind the rock."

And then a yell arose upon the air.

Bob fired his gun, but it had no effect in the darkness.

Then he drew his pistol and exclaimed, as the cannibals, incited by Hunter, rushed up the hill and encircled him on every side:

"Let 'em come, the beggars! They'll see how a man that is a man can stand and die without a groan!"

CHAPTER XIV.

So exclaimed Bob, his blood wrought up to the highest pitch.

"Call off your dogs, Hunter!" he shouted.

"Not much. We've got you."

"You'd better come and take me first."

The cannibals could be heard coming up the hillside. Bob looked anxiously for Hunter, but could obtain no glimpse of him, for he was very careful to keep out of sight.

The young man would, at that juncture, surely have shot Hunter, for he ascribed the whole trouble that he endured solely to him and the captain.

"Look! look!" exclaimed Alice, peering over the rock behind which she had crouched down. "They're creeping up to the right of you!"

Shadowy forms could dimly be perceived. Bob pointed his gun as well as he was able and fired.

A yell burst from the cannibals. Walla's voice and Hunter's could be heard encouraging them.

Bob fired his other barrel, the one loaded with ball, without doing execution.

He shoved in other cartridges, but his heart sank as he realized that he could not hold the hill alone.

In less than a minute they would be upon him, and then the game, so far as he was concerned, would be up.

Suddenly an idea occurred to him. He turned quickly to Alice, and caught her around the waist.

She struggled a little at first, for she thought he was wild with fear and desperation.

"Be quiet!" he exclaimed, in that tone of voice which she well knew she must obey.

Half a dozen steps brought him to the mouth of the crater.

The way he and Dick had gone down he remembered, and happened to strike it in the darkness.

Down they went until they reached the ledge.

"Good," he said. "They haven't got us yet. Listen, Alice, they've come together up there."

"They'll come down here."

"They don't know the way. Heavens!"

A cry arose—a horrible, despairing cry. Then a dark object shot by them and disappeared in the depths below.

It struck below with a dull thud.

"This is terrible!" said Alice, shuddering.

"Serves the beggar right," Bob replied, coolly.

"He went to eternity without warning."

"I wish they'd all go to the same place."

Alice said no more.

A few seconds later the voice of Hunter broke the silence. He was saying:

"That fellow's gone, Walla."

"There must be a large hole here."

"It seems so."

"Where does it go?"

"Down into the bowels of the earth somewhere."

"Where's Bob?"

"I don't know."

"And the girl?"

"She's gone with him."

"Have they, too, gone into the hole?"

"It's possible."

"Then we must go down."

"Humph! I don't want to risk my neck!"

"We'll look around."

"That's impossible, in this darkness."

The chief of the cannibals called one of his men, and he went down the side of the hill. Presently he returned with a long and slender piece of fat wood.

"That will give us light," said Walla. "Make some fire with one of those sticks of yours."

The chief meant the matches, which were a novelty among the cannibals. Hunter was very careful of his stock, but used two or three to get the torch alight.

Bob and Alice had heard all that was said by Hunter and Walla.

"They'll come down," she said.

"Let 'em," replied Bob, with clenched teeth.

"But they will kill you."

"Well, I can't die but once."

"Don't talk that way, Bob," the girl replied, with a sob.

"Never say die, is my motto."

"But suppose you have to?"

"Well, we won't borrow trouble."

"But we must look at it when it stares us in the face."

"I am looking at it," said the young man, calmly. "But there's no use crying over what we can't help."

"Forgive me, Bob."

"There's nothing to forgive," said the young man, gulping down a lump in his throat.

"It's a wonder how you can bear all my complaining."

"I can bear anything from you. Hark!"

A voice came down from the edge of the crater.

"Here's a kind of path," Hunter was saying.

"Where does it lead to?" Walla replied.

"How do I know? Down there somewhere."

The cannibal bent down and examined the ground carefully by the light of the torch.

"Here's tracks," he said.

"You're right."

"And they lead down below."

"Then those we seek are there."

"We will go down."

Walla called his men and gave the necessary orders.

A few minutes later they commenced to descend.

The two fugitives were now in a desperate situation.

If they remained where they were they could hardly avoid being discovered.

"We're lost!" said Alice.

"Not yet. Hallo!"

Some one was coming along softly toward them.

"There are two of them," said Bob.

He and Alice were standing quite close to the entrance which Dick and Bob, as we have seen, had entered once before.

Bob peered out of the shadow intently. Then he went noiselessly to the mouth of the entrance, taking Alice with him.

Pushing her gently inside, he stood concealed behind a light projection of rock and waited.

He heard Hunter say to Walla:

"I wonder where this ledge goes to?"

"We'll follow it and see."

"I'm blest if you do," said Bob to himself.

He crouched down for a spring, and when the two were exactly abreast of the opening he sprang out and threw his whole weight against them.

Taken entirely unprepared, they were both overthrown and fell off the ledge.

Down they went, and an unearthly cry from Hunter broke forth upon the air.

"Oh, heavens!" exclaimed Alice.

"They've gone down to explore the bottom of the crater," said Bob.

If she could have seen his face in the darkness she would have perceived that there was a gratified expression upon it.

The footsteps of the cannibals could be heard coming upon the ledge.

Hunter's voice cried out:

"Hey! you niggers above there, throw down something that we can climb up upon. Walla, are you dead—why don't you say something?"

"They ain't dead," said Bob.

"I'm glad of it."

"Well, you needn't be, then. We'd be a mighty sight better off if they were," said Bob, petulantly.

"You confounded donkeys up there, why don't you do as I tell you to?" Hunter called out harshly.

The man was wild with rage, or he would have known that there were no ropes among the cannibals.

They got over the difficulty, however, by taking off their breech-cloths, tying them together and lowering them over the ledge.

As there were about twenty of them, the cord thus improvised reached the shelf to which Walla and Hunter had fallen, and Hunter made a noose and put it around him.

"Pull!" he cried out.

A moment later he was on the ledge. Unfastening the rope, he sent it down to Walla, who was also soon landed safely beside him.

Hunter, who was angry yet, shouted out:

"Well, what have you niggers been doing?"

One of the cannibals, who understood some English, replied:

"Pulling you up."

"Where's the girl and that young rascal?"

"We don't know."

"Search the ledge all the way around."

This was done. No trace of Bob and the girl was found.

"Umph!" said one of the cannibals.

Walla went to him and said in his own language:

"What is it?"

"A passage."

"Where?"

"Right here."

Walla called Hunter and said:

"There's where they've gone."

"We'll rout 'em out."

"That will be dangerous. The passage is narrow."

"What can one man do against twenty?"

"Kill somebody."

"Are you afraid?"

"Oh, no!"

"Then order your men to advance."

Walla gave the order, and the cannibals, advancing into the passage, at last came to the large stone that closed it.

The stone showed plainly by the light of the torch.

"Foiled again!" exclaimed Hunter, in a rage. "We've come in here on a wild-goose chase, and they've escaped."

"Well, they can't get off the island," said Walla.

"They may seek the captain's protection."

As the chief was speaking, he accidentally put his shoulder against the stone.

"It moves!" he said.

"Nonsense. It's a solid bulkhead."

"No."

"Well, then, give it a push."

Walla pushed against it, and was astonished to find it moved around as if on a pivot, leaving a clear entrance into the main part of the cavern.

All the cannibals crowded through.

"They've escaped this way!" exclaimed Hunter. "They can't keep away from us long. After them!"

They all rushed out of the cavern together.

CHAPTER XV.

In the meantime, what had become of Bob and Alice?

Walla had not made a mistake when he said that they had escaped that way.

After Bob had pushed Hunter and the cannibal chief over the ledge he remembered the movable stone. Hope returned at a great bound.

"We'll escape yet!" he exclaimed.

He caught Alice around the waist and pushed her into the opening. Then he said, in a whisper:

"Come along without hesitation."

"Where are you taking me?" the timid girl exclaimed.

"There's no time to explain."

"But this darkness—"

"Never mind that. I know exactly where I am going. I've been here before. Don't turn coward now, Alice, but come along, and fear no danger."

She followed then without hesitation, and in a moment more they reached the stone. Bob now began to be anxious. It was possible that Dick and he had made a mistake about the huge stone being so nicely balanced that it could be upset. It was possible that, on account of its lower edge, it might be made to sway a little, but go no further.

If he had made a mistake they would undoubtedly be captured, and that for him would mean to be killed and eaten.

Summoning his resolution to have the worst of it over at once, he put his shoulder against the stone and pushed.

To his surprise, the stone did not upset, although it rocked considerably. Instead of capsizing, it swung around as if on a pivot, instead of going over bodily.

Groping his way around, Bob said:

"Eureka! Come on, Alice."

In a moment more they both were in the cavern.

Bob swung the stone around into its place, and was amazed to find that it brought up suddenly when it assumed its original position, and would go no further. This was the reason that it had not been discovered to be movable by those on the inside of the cavern, for, no matter how much pressure was brought to bear from that side, it was immovable. It required a pull, instead of a push, to turn it on its pivot from that side.

Bob now felt around for some pieces of rock with which to wedge it, so that it would not move, to prevent the cannibals from getting into the cavern from the crater, but could find none. To remain there longer and search he dare not.

"Come," he said to Alice.

"Now where?" she asked.

"Anywhere to get out of the way of those wretches. I wish we could come across Dick and the boatswain."

"It's possible we may."

Not daring to linger around the mouth of the cavern, they crossed the broken rocks and plunged again into the woods.

He thought the matter over. They might go to the yawl and set out to sea, but that would necessitate leaving Dick and the boatswain and his wife to the mercy of both parties, which was hardly to be thought of.

The skiff was on the island, to be sure, but that was hardly the boat to take women in, and, besides, Dick could not be induced to leave for good until he had released Nellie.

He concluded, however, to go to the yawl and get on board, as one of the best places of concealment the island afforded.

Explaining the situation to Alice, they turned away and went through the woods.

Bob had now little fear of being discovered by the cannibals that night, unless they happened to be seen, as had been the case once that night, but did not bid fair to occur again.

But before they had gone very far a new danger suddenly became observable. Objects became more distinct in the woods. Alice first observed it, and said:

"It's growing lighter. Is it morning?"

"No, the moon has come up. When we get out into the open we'll see it."

"That's a good thing for us. We can see where to go."

"Yes, and our enemies can see us."

"Heavens! I never thought of that."

"Don't be alarmed. We'll only have to exercise a little more caution. Are you tired, Alice?"

"A little."

"You'll have a good long rest when we reach the boat. I think you're right. We'll come somewhere near it on this course."

They went on a while longer. Suddenly they came upon an unexpected danger.

The captain had moved his camp.

Stepping suddenly out of the thick woods, they came suddenly upon it, within a hundred yards of the fires.

Alice caught Bob's arm in alarm.

"Don't be frightened," he said.

"We're in the full moonlight. They'll see us."

"You're right," said a voice, as the captain stepped out of the underbrush. "Glad to see you, Alice. Hallo, Hunter! Is that you?"

"I guess not."

"Bob, by thunder!"

"You're right."

"Didn't you go down in the ship?"

"No fault of yours that I didn't."

"How was it my fault?"

"Oh, belay that!" exclaimed Bob. "What's the use throwing soft-solder on me? It won't go down! You tried to drown Dick and me, and you'll answer for it if we ever get home."

This was, perhaps, a foolish remark of Bob's, whose cue it was at that time to try to conciliate the captain, who said, angrily:

"You'd better take a reef in that tongue of yours when you're talking to your captain."

"You're no captain of mine. I'd rather serve under a crocodile than you."

"Hush, Bob," said Alice.

"I don't have to."

"Well," growled the captain, "I'll take you into camp."

"I guess not."

"Won't you come without force?"

"No, nor with it."

"We'll see."

The captain moved toward Bob, who said:

"Stand back, you rascal!"

"Are you coming?"

"No."

"Then I'll take you."

"You'll take that, instead."

Crack!

Bob's fist shot out, straight from the shoulder, and the captain, struck squarely between the eyes, measured his length upon the sand.

CHAPTER XVI.

Alice exclaimed, terrified:

"Run, Bob, run!"

The young man replied, grimly:

"Not if I know it. I'll stay here and give that brute his fill, if I die for it."

"His men will come."

"Let 'em. If they're bound to capture me, one or two of 'em will get plugged first."

The captain arose. His face was bleeding, and he wiped the blood from it. Then he looked at Bob with a terrible expression, and said:

"I'll have your blood for that!"

"All right. Take it if you can; but don't be too sure of it."

The hand of the captain moved stealthily toward his belt, in which were a pair of pistols.

Bob saw the movement, and exclaimed:

"None of that!"

At the same time he brought his gun to a level, and continued:

"If you want to die you had better put your hand on that pistol."

The captain dropped his hand. His look became sheepish in the moonlight, as he said:

"You'd better come to camp, Bob. We'll treat you well."

"That's all in my eye."

"How did you get Alice away from Hunter and the cannibals?"

"Find out and you'll know."

"You don't seem to like me."

As Bob made no reply to this, the captain continued:

"Well, you don't know me. I'm glad you've got the best of Hunter, though, because I never did like that sneak."

Bob replied, coolly:

"Birds of a feather, captain."

"Do you mean I'm like Hunter?"

"Yes, in rascality."

"Bob!" said Alice, warningly.

The young man was on his mettle. He seemed bent on provoking the captain. Or, rather, he did not care particularly whether he angered him more or not. The face of the captain colored up.

"I've tried to make friends with you," he said, between his teeth. "And now I'm your enemy for life."

"That suits me."

"I'll hunt you down."

"I'll bet you'll try."

"Hey, men! Hey, hey! Ahoy!"

He was roaring like a bull, his intention being to arouse the camp and bring the men to the spot.

He again shouted:

"Hurrah! hurrah! Help!"

Signs of life at once could be noticed in the camp.

"Ha! ha!" laughed the captain, fiendishly. "You'll soon be in my power; and then if I don't deliver you over to the cannibals to be spitted, may I be shot."

Bob realized the danger.

Should he run with Alice, what was to prevent the captain from shooting him in the back?"

Alice had realized the danger and had turned very pale and was trembling. She knew that, if she fell into the power of the captain, she would be at once delivered over to Hunter once more.

Bob made his mind up on the instant.

He again pointed his gun full at the captain's heart and said:

"You know I'm a man of my word. Now, don't you stir, or I swear by the memory of my mother that I will shoot you dead."

The captain gasped:

"You would murder me?"

"So help me heaven!"

The young man advanced. The captain, knowing that the oath would be kept, stood still. When Bob was within good striking distance he let go his right fist and the captain once more measured his length upon the sand.

Before he could arise, or recover from the confusion into which the unexpected blow had thrown him, Bob was upon him and snatched both pistols from his belt.

"Good-by!" he said.

By this time the sailors were running toward the scene. One of them discharged a musket, apparently without aim, for the bullet went twenty feet wide of the mark.

Bob caught Alice by the hand and cried out:

"Away—away!"

They plunged into the woods and ran for fifteen minutes, until Alice began to breathe hard, and gasped:

"Go on, Bob, and leave me."

"When I do may I be shot! Can you go no further?"

"Not running."

"Then I'll carry you."

"No; I can walk."

"Then we'll try that a while."

They now went at a more easy pace. Bob listened, but could hear nothing of pursuers. They had evidently got off the track. Suddenly Alice stopped.

"I can go no further," she said.

"You must."

"I cannot."

"For heaven's sake, Alice, bear up a little longer. We are close to the yawl."

"I am utterly exhausted."

The gasping way in which she said this convinced Bob that it was so. Without a moment's hesitation he caught her up and went on with her in his arms.

"Put me down," she said. "Oh, Bob, you can never save me in this way!"

He replied, firmly:

"Then I'll be captured with you."

He continued:

"Don't say another word. I'll have my own way."

He was a tiger when his blood was up, and the girl said no more to him.

He carried her on until they reached the water. He peered anxiously around him by the light of the moon.

"Ah! I thought so," he said.

Wading along the shore a short distance, he pushed aside the overhanging bushes.

"Here's the yawl," he said.

He made his way through the bushes and placed Alice in the yawl. Then he arranged the bushes in as natural a way as he could, and returned to the boat.

"How do you feel?" he asked.

"Well, except tired. Oh, Bob! you are risking your life to save me from Hunter."

"Nonsense! It's fun for me. I'm selfish."

"You are the most generous of men."

"Pshaw! Here, I'm going to make a bed for you. You must get some sleep."

There was in the yawl some clothing which had been left by the sailors. Bob placed them in the bottom of the boat, making as comfortable a resting-place as he was able, and said:

"Now lie down and sleep."

Day commenced to break.

Splash!

"Ha!" he said.

He looked out through the bushes. A cannibal was wading along, scanning the bushes.

He passed on, discovering nothing.

One after another passed.

At last Walla came. Bob now held his breath, for he knew Walla was the shrewdest of them all. Would he go on? It seemed as if he would, but suddenly he paused and parted bushes.

Bob was in open sight then.

They looked at each other. Then Bob's hand shot out and clutched the cannibal's throat.

"Ugh!" grunted Walla.

Bob threw himself out of the yawl, and a terrible struggle for life began.

CHAPTER XVII

Suddenly the grip of the cannibal chief relaxed. He apparently became weaker and weaker, until at last Bob felt him a dead weight in his hand, his head being under water.

Alice, who had been watching the combat, said:

"Don't choke a dead man, Bob."

Bob released his grip and the body of the cannibal sank to the bottom.

Bob sat down on the gunwale of the yawl and breathed hard. The struggle had been a severe one.

Alice looked at him in sympathy.

"You're doing all this for me," she said.

"Well, who had a better right to serve you?"

The girl comprehended his meaning. She blushed and looked down, and then said:

"No one."

She continued:

"Drag Walla out of the water."

"What's the good of that?"

"It seems so hard to let a human being lie there like a drowned dog."

Bob parted the bushes and grabbed at the body. Then he sprang back, startled.

The body sprang upright in the water. It uttered a yell that could have been heard two hundred yards, and then darted down the stream.

Walla was thoroughly alive.

Walla, finding that he was fated to get the worst of the struggle, simulated death and allowed himself to sink down without motion, rightly concluding that Bob would think him dead and relax his grip.

The result answered his expectations.

Bob did not attempt to follow.

He returned to the yawl and for a moment stood leaning against the gunwale in deep thought.

Alice, who had not seen Walla arise, because of the bushes which intervened, said, tremulously:

"Whose cry was that?"

Bob replied, bitterly:

"Walla's."

"He's dead."

"He's very much alive."

The girl looked at him in astonishment.

Bob explained the circumstances. He continued:

"Now, Walla will find his men and bring them here. What chance will we have?"

"Heavens!" said the girl. "You are right."

"There hasn't been much blood shed yet; but, if we expect to escape, there probably will be."

The girl shuddered, saying:

"Are we then lost?"

"We must go to sea in the yawl."

"And leave Nellie and Dick?"

"We can cruise on and off the coast, and to-night we can return for them, if they're not captured."

"Do you anticipate that?"

"Well, we know that Nellie is captured now, and I hardly see how Dick can escape both the sailors and the cannibals on a small island like this."

"We must manage to save them somehow."

"We'll do the very best we can."

"What is to be done now?"

"Get the yawl out."

Untying the fastenings, Bob pushed the yawl to the bushes and parted them. Then he shoved the boat through into the water beyond.

He looked around anxiously up and down the coast. No traces of enemies could be seen.

"Get down in the bottom of the boat, Alice," he said.

"What for?"

"They may fire from the shore."

She crouched down in the bottom of the yawl, not even her head being visible.

Bang!

A shot came whistling by.

It passed over the spot where Alice had been sitting and came close to Bob.

He sat down very coolly and took up the oars.

"Close shave," he said.

He pulled out toward the open sea.

The yawl had been hidden in a cove which was shaped on each side like a sickle.

It was almost circular in form, but at its outer side two points approached each other until they were not more than a hundred yards apart.

Through this narrow space the yawl would have to be forced to get out to sea.

Bob bent to his oars. Hunter appeared upon the shore, summoned by Walla and the cannibals. The captain and his party were also seen some distance to the east.

There was a hurried consultation among the cannibals and Hunter, who said:

"They'll escape."

Walla nodded.

"Can't something be done?"

The cannibal chief replied, grimly:

"Jump in and swim after the boat."

"Hey! ahoy!" shouted the captain, from his side of the cove.

Hunter called back:

"What is it? What's wanted?"

"Do you see the place out yonder where the points come nearly together?"

"Yes."

"You run out with your cannibals to the point on your side of the cove, and I'll go on the other. We can cut him off."

No sooner was this proposition made than it was complied with, and both parties started for the positions named, on a dead run.

Bob saw his danger.

If he could pass the place where the points approached each other before the cannibals on one side and the sailors on the other got there, he and Alice would be safe for the time being, for they would be on the open sea and out of reach.

He redoubled his exertions with the oars, and now it became, indeed, a race for life.

CHAPTER XVIII

Bob hastily set the sail and, aided by a stiff breeze, succeeded in reaching and passing the danger point before his enemies could get there.

Five minutes later the yawl, running out to sea with a beam wind, was fully a mile from shore.

"Where are you going now?" asked Alice.

"We'll run off five or six miles, and then lay to and wait until night."

"What's the reason of that?"

"We must visit the island to-night."

"Visit the island?"

"Yes, our friends are there."

"True, and it will never do to leave them."

"Never, while there's the slightest chance of saving them."

The yawl ran off swiftly, proving to be a good sailer, until the required distance was passed, when Bob put the tiller down and the boat came up in the wind.

"Here we'll stay," he said.

"And wait for night?"

"Yes."

Bob continued:

"You had better lie down, Alice, and get some sleep."

"I don't want any. You remember I slept a long time last night."

"Ain't you in the least sleepy?"

"No; but you must get some sleep."

"Call me if anything happens, then," said Bob.

"I'll do so."

"And mind you don't let me sleep longer than sundown, in any event."

"I'll be careful."

Bob lay down in the bottom of the yawl, and, as he was really thoroughly tired out, and half dead for sleep, it was not more than a minute before he was insensible to outward things.

He did not even dream, for he slept the deep sleep of exhaustion.

The mast having been taken down, the yawl drifted idly about, floating but little either way, for the tide and wind were in different directions.

True to her word, at sunset Alice touched Bob lightly on the shoulder, and said:

"Come, Bob."

His eyes were open on the instant.

He looked up, and said:

"What's the matter?"

"It's sunset."

"Hallo! Why, I thought I had just closed my eyes."

"You've been asleep several hours."

"And feel the better for it."

He was up on the instant, saying:

"I'm hungry. I wonder if there's anything to eat in the yawl?"

There was nothing, however, to be found, and they were obliged to content themselves with the probability of finding some shell-fish when they reached the island.

As soon as the darkness had so far increased that they were sure they could not be seen from the island, Bob set sail, and steered in that direction.

In an hour, with a good, stiff breeze, they were within a mile of it, and then Bob shook the boat up in the wind, and said:

"It won't do to land in the cove."

"Why not?"

"They'll be on the lookout for us."

"That's so."

"We'd better coast around the island and land on the other side."

The yawl was now put off before the wind, doubling the capes, and then, with the wind abeam, went bowling along on her course.

Suddenly Bob shot her into a narrow opening that could be dimly seen among the line of breakers, and in ten minutes the keel of the yawl grated upon the sand on shore.

Wishing to lose no time, when every moment might be of the utmost value, Bob leaped ashore, fastened the yawl by the painter to a large stone, and said:

"You had better stay here, Alice."

"If you say so."

"It's best. You'll be safer here."

"I'll do anything you say, Bob."

"Will you?"

"You know it."

"Then do this."

He put his face down close to hers. Her eyes met his, and she colored sensibly.

"Will you?" he said.

She smiled saucily and shook her head.

A moment later his lips met hers, and he had given her his first kiss.

"Oh, Bob!" she said.

He laughed, and said, tenderly:

"It's all right, dear; you ought to have let me done that long before."

Then, embracing her once more, he turned and went away in the darkness on his dangerous errand, leaving her sitting in the boat, blushing, half ashamed and wholly happy.

CHAPTER XIX.

Bob hardly knew where to go to find Dick, but he had made up his mind that if he and the boatswain had escaped capture he would find them somewhere on the coast. The reason of this was that they would be certain that he would come back for them, and they would naturally watch for his coming. He determined, therefore, that he would make the entire circuit of the island, if necessary, and if he did not come across them then that he would venture into the interior.

His patience was not put to such a severe test as that, however, for he had hardly gone a mile when a figure stepped out from behind a point of rock, and said:

"Is that you, Bob?"

The young man brought his gun to his shoulder, and said: "Who are you?"

"Dick."

"Good!"

In a moment the two shook hands, Dick saying:

"I knew you'd be back."

"Of course. You didn't think I was going to leave you here did you?"

"Not much. I say, Bob?"

"Well?"

"You're a daisy."

"Hum! Where's the boatswain?"

"Around the rock."

They went around to him, and found him and his wife together. Dick and he had come together by accident that morning, after having been separated the night before, and had managed to keep out of the hands of their enemies, although they had been very hard pushed.

Having explained this much, Dick said:

"Where's Alice?"

"In the boat."

"Then let's you, the boatswain and myself go and see what can be done while the wife goes back to the yawl."

"That's the best plan."

"Follow the coast down for about a mile," said Bob, "and you'll see the yawl. Do you know how to manage a boat?"

"As well as you do, sir. I was brought up by the sea."

"Good. Then you had better take the yawl out about a hundred yards from shore, into the strip of still water that's there. Keep her there until you hear our signal, which will be a long whistle."

The boatswain's wife nodded, and went in the indicated direction of the captain's camp.

Bob asked where the cannibals were.

"In and around the cavern," said the boatswain.

"Then we won't be likely to run across them?"

"Not unless they're scouting around."

"We must look out for that."

As Bob went along he kept constantly picking up shell-fish, opening and eating them, so that when they at length turned off from the coast his hunger was satisfied.

Half the width of the island had been passed over, when Dick said:

"We must now be careful. We're coming near the captain's camp."

They went on very cautiously.

Suddenly the boatswain whispered:

"There it is. See the light?"

They crept up so that they could see the interior of the camp. Lying down in the bushes, they looked around.

No one was in sight.

Bob was about to say something, when the boatswain said:

"Sh! be quiet."

"What is it?"

"A sentinel."

"Where?"

"Within twenty yards of us."

It was so, sure enough. A sailor was standing with his back against a tree, leaning on his musket. He did not seem to evince the least desire in the world to go to sleep.

"It's Sykes," whispered the boatswain. "I know him; he's a good fellow enough. I'll go and speak to the fellow."

"Won't he betray us?"

"No. If he won't join us, I'll answer that he won't give us away."

The boatswain arose and walked out deliberately.

The sentinel called out:

"Ahoy!"

"It's all right, Sykes."

"Come up in the wind and show your colors, or I'll give you a broadside."

"The boatswain."

"Hello, Bill, that you?"

"You're right, my hearty."

"I'm mighty glad of it, mate."

"Thank ye, Sykes. I don't have the cap'n to thank for it, either. The idea of his tradin' my wife off to that greasy canibal."

"That was mean, Bill."

"Mean! I should say so. I'll get even with him yet, the dirty swab."

"I don't blame ye, Bill."

"Thanks again, mate. Where's Miss Nellie's tent?"

"That one in the middle."

"Is she alone in there?"

"Yes."

"The deuce! Hey, look out, Bill. There comes the skipper. Slip into the woods."

"Hunter's with him, by thunder!"

"So he is."

"Ugh! the son of a sea-cook! Wouldn't I like to——"

"Into the bushes, Bill—quick!"

The boatswain crept into the bushes and concealed himself, saying:

"Don't give me away, Sykes."

CHAPTER XX.

The captain and Hunter came on until they were near the sentinel, talking in low tones, when the captain said:

"Well, Sykes, how's everything?"

"All right, sir."

They moved on until they were abreast of the spot where Bob and Dick were concealed, when Hunter said:

"It's queer we can't find Dick and the boatswain. They must be on the island."

"They are concealed somewhere among the rocks or in the woods. The cannibals will hunt them up to-morrow."

"Do you think Bob and Alice have returned to the island?"

"I shouldn't wonder. I don't believe they will be satisfied to leave Dick and Nellie here. Besides, they have no provisions."

"If Dick and Bob come together they'll be likely to make an attempt to rescue Nellie."

"That's what I've been thinking, Hunter, and, as a consequence, I shall sleep no more this night."

"What are you going to do?"

"Watch all night in front of the tent of Nellie."

"I'll watch with you."

"Will you? Good for you, Hunter."

"Bob?" whispered Dick.

"Careful, Dick."

"If those fellows are going to stand guard all night, we must stop them from going back."

"So I thought."

"Otherwise we can't get Nellie undiscovered."

"You're right, we can't."

"Get out your shooter."

Bob drew a pistol.

"Be ready," said Dick, in a low tone.

"All ready."

"Now!"

Noiselessly they arose to their feet and stepped out, Dick saying:

"Hands up, or we'll fire!"

The captain and Hunter were taken entirely by surprise. The two young men had their pistols cocked and pointed.

Dick said, sternly:

"Not a word out of you, to give the alarm, or down you go, so help me heaven!"

"Do you mean to kill us?"

"Not if you behave yourselves."

"What do you want us to do?"

Instead of replying to that question, Dick said to Bob:

"Here's my handkerchief. Take your own, also, and tie their hands."

He menaced them with his pistol while this was being done, neither daring to resist.

When they were securely tied, Dick called out:

"Hi! bo'sun?"

"Here, sir."

The boatswain came shuffling up, and the young men led their prisoners into the woods a hundred yards or so, when they stopped, disarmed them, and said:

"Now, boatswain, you're to guard these fellows while we go after Nellie."

"Ay, ay!"

"If they attempt to escape, or give the alarm, what will you do?"

"Whatever you say."

"I say shoot them both."

"It shall be done, sir."

"Good. We'll be back in a few minutes. Now, Bob, come on. Have your pistols ready. I'm going to bring back Nellie, or die trying."

"That's the talk. I'm with you."

They walked swiftly but silently across the open toward the tent.

"Sh!" said Bob. "Somebody's coming."

The sentinel, Sykes, was advancing toward them from the cover of the woods.

"Heavens!" said Dick. "We forgot the sentinel."

"He'll ruin all."

"He must die. Stand here."

With a pistol ready cocked in each hand, Dick advanced to meet the sentinel, saying in a low voice:

"Halt, Sykes, or you die!"

CHAPTER XXI.

The sentinel stopped on the instant. He seemed startled and alarmed by the warlike sensation, and stood still for a moment, without answering.

Dick asked, sternly:

"What do you want here?"

"To see you, sir."

"Well, you see me. Now just have your say out in a hurry."

"Well, sir," said Sykes, "if you intend to kill me you're thinking of a very wrong thing. And you won't do it without a struggle, I can tell you."

"Why did you come here, Sykes?"

"To serve you."

"You're in the captain's service."

"Not much, now. He's shown himself, lately, the worst man I ever saw, and I'll no longer serve under him."

"You want me to be your captain, instead of the skipper?"

"That's just it."

This suited Dick to perfection. It made an addition to their force of a strong and able-bodied man, who would fight to the death, if necessary.

"I'm glad to have you with us, Sykes."

"I'm no baby, sir. I can fight like a tiger, if it comes to that."

"I believe you."

This conversation was carried on in so low a voice that it had not awoken the sailors, who were lying asleep within a few yards with their muskets at their sides, on account of possible treachery from the cannibals.

They walked toward Bob and Dick said:

"We've got a new friend."

Both took Sykes' hand, and said:

"Good for you, old chap."

"Well, sir, you see I've got tired of the skipper's rascality."

"It's time, Sykes."

"I think so, too, sir."

"Is anybody in the tent with Nellie?" asked Dick.

"Not a soul."

"You two stand here, and I'll go in."

Dick parted the folds of the tent and looked inside. A small lamp had been brought out of the ship, and this Nellie now had turned down low, but the light was sufficient to show her position to Dick.

She was lying, dressed, upon a bed of boughs, covered with a blanket, made by the sailors.

She seemed to be sleeping, and there were traces of tears upon her cheeks.

Dick looked at her for an instant, drinking in her beauty, and then touched her lightly.

She awoke instantly, and perceiving a man standing by her side, uttered a low cry of alarm, and said:

"Leave me, sir! What business have you here?"

"I'm Dick."

She uttered a joyous cry.

"Dick!"

"Yes, yes; don't talk so loud. You must come with me."

"Where?"

"Anywhere that circumstances dictate."

"I'm ready to go anywhere with you, Dick."

She rose from the couch, got her bonnet and shawl, and said:

"I am ready."

She continued:

"Where is Alice?"

"Safe."

Nellie said no more, and they walked out of the tent.

"Where now?" asked Bob.

"To the place where we left the captain and Hunter. I want to show them we've got their last prisoner."

They entered the woods, and found the captain and Hunter lying where they had left them, guarded by the boatswain.

Dick, with Nellie, walked in front of them, and Dick said, tauntingly:

"Hope I see you well, sir."

The captain made no reply, but glared at Dick and Nellie vindictively.

"It's a good thing looks don't kill," said Dick. "I've no doubt now that, if you had the power, you would like to cut my throat."

"Yes, I would."

"No doubt of it. Well, we'll have to bid you good-by, for we've got to leave the island pretty soon."

The captain said nothing, but ground his teeth in impotent rage.

Dick then led the way across the island, followed by the others. Reaching the coast, they hurried along the shore until they came to the place where the boat had been left.

Bob whistled. The sound of oars was heard, and in a moment the yawl, rowed by the boatswain's wife, grated upon the sand.

Greetings were exchanged, and then Dick said:

"Get into the boat, Nellie. Now, chums, we must have some food. Let's go and look for some turtles and shell-fish."

"And water," added the boatswain.

"Yes," said Bob. "Do you know where there is any, Bill?"

"Plenty. I came across it t' day."

"What is there to hold it?"

"The yawl's keg."

This was got out, and the boatswain took it and volunteered to find the water.

He set off toward the woods, while Dick and the others started on their turtle hunt, leaving the females in the boat.

Around a point of rocks below turtles had been seen, and they started off in that direction.

Both stumbled over something.

It was an immense turtle, slowly making its way up on high ground to bury its eggs in the sand.

He turned it over on its back, and then went to hunt for another.

Before long each had his turtle—all he could carry—and they started back toward the yawl.

Suddenly, as they rounded the point of rocks, a yell, so fierce and wild as to curdle the very blood, was heard.

It was so close as to be almost on top of them.

An instant later fully a score of cannibals sprang out upon them, headed by Walla.

Before our friends could even drop their turtles the cannibals were upon them.

Taken at this disadvantage—five to one—what could they do?

There was nothing to be done except fight as best they could, and fight they did, but it was of no avail.

Almost before they had time to think about it they were thrown down, and bound with ropes made of bark.

Then Walla gave directions in a low voice to some of his men, and they started off up the coast.

Bob instantly comprehended their object.

"Hey!" he shouted. "Hey, aboard the yawl! The cannibals have got us! Pull out to sea!"

Walla clapped his hand over Bob's mouth, and laying a hand on his knife, said, fiercely:

"Hush, or you'll die!"

"Humph!" said Bob, coolly. "I might as well die now as be roasted in the morning."

Meanwhile, those in the yawl had heard Bob's cry of warning.

For three women to think of fighting a horde of cannibals was out of the question.

The only chance was flight.

The boatswain's wife, being the most powerful of the party, sprang out of the yawl and shoved it into the water, where it floated.

Then she seized one of the oars and pushed until it would no longer reach bottom, when she took both oars and rowed it into still deeper water, until a hundred and fifty yards from shore.

There, for the time being, they were safe, for the cannibals would not dare swim after them, on account of the sharks,

which they could not see in the night, and which would be almost certain to capture them.

An intense yell at the edge of the sea denoted the rage of the cannibals.

"Hear them!" said Nellie, shuddering.

"They can't reach us here," said the boatswain's wife.

"But they've got Dick and Bob."

Sally returned, doggedly:

"But they haven't got Bill yet."

"How do you know?"

"He went in a different direction, you know, after the water. He'll rig up some plan to help 'em."

"What can he do alone?"

"Bill's smart, he is," returned Sally, with pardonable pride in her husband, the boatswain. "He'll do the very best he can, and don't you forget it."

"Hello, hello!" came a voice from the shore.

"It's Dick's voice," said Nellie, clasping her hands.

"Stay off shore," shouted Dick. "Don't let 'em entice you—The sound of a blow was heard, and then the fall of a body."

"They've killed him!" shrieked Nellie. "Pull for shore, Sally, pull for shore."

She seized one of the oars.

"What would you do?" asked the boatswain's wife.

"I must go ashore!"

The boatswain's wife caught hold of the oar and took it from her, saying:

"You're mad! Do you, too, want to fall into the hands of the cannibals? If we go either way we must get farther off from shore."

The young girl burst into a passionate fit of weeping.

She cried out:

"Oh, Dick, Dick!"

Then she fell down in the bottom of the yawl.

CHAPTER XXII.

With their hands tied behind them, Dick, Bob and Sykes had been hurried along to the edge of the shore.

Walla menaced Dick with a club, and said:

"Call to the women."

"What do you want me to say to them?"

"Tell them to come ashore."

Dick rejoined, coolly:

"That ain't much to do."

"Will you do it?"

"Certainly."

He called out, as we have seen, bidding them do exactly the contrary.

The next instant Walla's club descended on his head, and he measured his length upon the sand.

Bob struggled with his bonds.

He cried out, huskily:

"You man-eating rascal! Oh, if I could only get at you!"

"Shut up!" said Walla, fiercely.

"All right, Bob, old boy. I've only got a bit of a headache," said Dick, faintly.

Assured that Dick was not dead, Bob remained quiet, saying no more.

Dick managed to gain his feet.

"Ugh!" he said. "You gave me a deuce of a rap, Walla."

"Keep quiet, then, unless you say what I want you to," returned the cannibal chief, fiercely. "The next time I hit you you'll die."

He continued, this time addressing Sykes:

"Where is the boatswain?"

"In the boat."

"Didn't he come with you?"

"No."

This part, at least, of Sykes' answer was correct, for the boatswain did not go with them when they went hunting for turtles.

It deceived Walla, however, who grunted and remained silent, apparently in deep thought.

Presently he motioned toward the woods, and all except four went that way, taking the prisoners with them.

When they arrived at the edge of the woods the prisoners were tied to trees, and a fire was lighted, over which turtle steaks were soon broiling.

The savages proceeded to gorge themselves, paying no attention to the prisoners, who were very hungry, and, in spite of their peril, would have welcomed the food.

While they were eating, the captain, Hunter, and the sailor stepped up.

Hunter had managed to twist his wrists out of the handker-

chief, after which he easily unbound the captain, and they at once aroused the sailors and rushed forth on the hunt. As soon as the fire was started they saw its glimmer among the trees and came forward, as we have stated.

The captain and Hunter were soon put into possession of all the facts, after which they retired to consult.

After a while Hunter, leaving the captain, walked up to Dick, and said:

"The tables are turned."

"They are."

"How do you like it this time?"

"Oh, well enough."

"You lie, Dick Swift!"

"You wouldn't dare tell me that if my hands weren't tied to this tree."

The professor approached, and said:

"You are a coward, Hunter, and a brute into the bargain."

"Thank you, sir."

"I'm sorry I ever had anything to do with you."

"The dislike is mutual, sir."

Dick regarded the professor gratefully, but made a sign to him to say no more. He walked off to the fire and regaled himself with a turtle steak.

"What do you expect to do with us?" asked Dick.

"You'll know in the morning."

"Give the cannibals their own sweet will, eh?"

"You'll have a chance for life."

"That's clever."

"You may bet your life it'll be a chance we can't take," said Bob.

"You shut up," said Hunter. "If you don't I'll knock your brains out with a club."

Bob thought it best to be prudent. Hunter regarded him angrily for a while, and then turned away and rejoined the captain and Walla.

The consultation lasted some time longer, and then, a strong guard having been set, they threw themselves down and went to sleep.

The boatswain kept close, and although they were satisfied that he was hovering around the camp, nothing was seen of him.

In the morning the cannibals did not seem to be in any hurry.

One of the men set on watch at the seashore came and made his report.

Walla received it carelessly, and then they busied themselves, as before, getting their breakfasts.

But they offered the prisoners neither food nor water.

Breakfast having been finished, the cannibal chief gave the signal, and the prisoners were unbound from the trees, their hands, however, remaining tied.

They were then placed in the midst of the cannibals and marched down to the seashore.

Near the edge of the sea they noticed that three posts had been set up.

"They'll roast us there," said Bob.

"That's the intention, I guess."

"And it will succeed."

Dick nodded.

The yawl, with the three women still in it, was about a hundred yards offshore.

Placing the captives so that the females could distinctly see them, Walla called out:

"Can you hear me in the boat?"

"Yes, we hear you," the boatswain's wife called out.

"We are going to roast these men!"

"Oh, heavens!" exclaimed Nellie.

"We'll spare them on one condition," Walla continued.

"What is it?"

"That you all come ashore and give yourselves up as our prisoners."

CHAPTER XXIII.

"We'll do it," cried the two girls together.

"No, you won't," said the boatswain's wife.

"We must. We can't let them die that way."

"They'd kill and eat them just the same, and have you, too."

"We must try and save them."

The two girls tried to get possession of the oars, and the boatswain's wife to keep them.

How this struggle would have terminated is uncertain—for the yawl rocked fearfully and threatened to capsize—had not Dick and Bob both called out:

"Sally's right—you can't save us."

Nellie sank down in the bottom of the boat in a dead faint. Alice could do nothing alone against the boatswain's wife, and sat down, exhausted, covering her face with her hands.

The boatswain's wife, as pale as death, muttered:

"Where's Bill? He ought to do something to help 'em."

But he was nowhere to be seen.

Finding that the negotiations were at an end, Walla uttered a yell of anger, and shouted:

"Away with them to the stake!"

The three prisoners were seized, hurried to the stake and lashed thereto.

Hunter whispered something to Walla, who nodded.

Hunter then seized a knife and, walking to Bob, said:

"I am going to kill you. I have solicited the job."

He put the knife to Bob's throat and said:

"I shall push it through your neck very slowly, so as to cause you all the agony I can."

The professor sprang forward, crying:

"You shall not do it!"

It was noticed that there was also a stir among the sailors.

The professor was caught by Walla, who dragged him away, assisted by the captain.

"Now die!" said Hunter, savagely.

The knife touched Bob's throat. He closed his eyes.

Bang!

A puff of smoke curled from the bushes.

Hunter fell forward, with a wild cry, shot through the heart.

Instantly all eyes were turned in the direction of the woods. The professor seized the opportunity to cut the bonds of the three prisoners, who sprang forward and seized their guns, which were lying in a heap.

Springing back, they stood on the defensive.

"Upon them!" shouted the captain to the sailors.

"Fight, boys, fight!" shouted the boatswain from the bushes. "I'll be with you in a minute."

He it was who had shot Hunter.

Sykes spoke to the sailors, who had not obeyed the captain's order.

"Boys, we've stood this long enough," he said. "If we're killed and eaten, how do you know you won't be next?"

"That's so!" cried one of the sailors. "If we've got to fight, we'll fight the cannibals."

All, with the exception of one or two, sprang to the side of our friends.

Walla saw that the critical moment had come, and gave the signal for attack.

Then commenced a terrible fight.

The sailors fought like tigers, as American sailors always fight, when they fight at all.

But they were outnumbered by the cannibals, and first one side and then the other was forced back.

But unlooked-for good fortune happened.

Suddenly the captain fell, shot through the breast. Then Walla went down, a bullet being sent through his head by the boatswain.

Deprived of their leader, the cannibals broke and ran for the woods, followed by a parting volley. In two minutes not one of them was to be seen.

The whole of the conflict had been seen by the boatswain's wife, who rowed the yawl ashore, and was received in the arms of her husband. Bob and Dick clasped Alice and Nellie to their hearts.

The remainder of the day was occupied in burying the slain and making preparations to leave the island.

Turtles enough to last some time were found that night, a sufficient quantity of water was put on board, and next morning they set sail.

All after that went well. On the afternoon of the second day they were picked up by a ship and landed safely at the nearest port.

Bob, Dick, Sykes and the boatswain and his wife went with Alice and Nellie to their parents.

Of course there was a double wedding afterward, or the story would not end properly.

As soon as it could be done, Dick and Bob built a ship, of which the boatswain was given the command, with Sykes for first mate.

What became of the remnant of the band of cannibals who were left on the island is not definitely known, but it is supposed that they found the skiff and managed to cross over to their own country.

Next week's issue will contain "THE TWO SCHOOLS AT OAKDALE; OR, THE RIVAL STUDENTS OF CORRINA LAKE." By Allyn Draper.

CURRENT NEWS

The rifle-shooting championship among the colleges has been won by the Michigan Agricultural College with a score of 12,998 points, against 12,997 made by the Washington State College. The University of Michigan was the winner of the special prize for the best score of a non-military college, which was 12,831 points. The best score in class B, 12,654 points, was made by Columbia University.

The Germans are using at the present time a 104 mm. anti-aircraft Krupp gun, 45 calibers long, which sends a projectile weighing 15½ kilogrammes, with a muzzle velocity of 800 meters, to a height of 4,000 meters. It can be fired at the rate of 15 rounds per minute. The shrapnel shell which it fires is said to burst into 625 fragments. Guns of this type, as well as those of 120 mm., are the ordnance which defends Ostend.

Henry McEllery, a farmer living near Milan, Ohio, says he has built a hen house so illuminated with acetylene gas that each day is divided into four periods, two of darkness and two of light so alternated that his hens have what they think is two days and two nights every twenty-four hours. "The result is an egg from each hen every time one of the artificial days dawn," says McEllery, who, fighting the high cost of living, refuses to protect his scheme.

Since March 15 last, when Congress authorized an increase of 20,000 men to the army, 4,699 men have enlisted. The actual net gain has been something over 2,000, it is estimated, but recruiting is considered satisfactory and above normal. War Department figures show the army's net losses each month are about 2,000 men from all causes. Present recruiting is proceeding at the rate of about 4,000 men monthly. Last year 42,000 men left the service, but 17,000 re-enlisted, a net loss of 25,000, according to War Department records.

An American manufacturer has recently placed on the market a line of shoes for electrical workers, which are made to withstand potentials up to 20,000 volts without harm to the wearer. The shoes contain no cement and have no seams, but are vulcanized into a solid piece under high pressure in aluminum molds. A novel feature of the shoes is that the soles are white, and under the white surface is a layer of red rubber. When the sole has worn down to a point where the red is exposed, it is a sign to the wearer that a new half sole should be immediately cemented in place.

A large packing concern in California has installed an automatic means for opening the doors of its horse stable which allows the horses to escape at any time of the day or night if there is danger of fire, says Popular Mechanics. The device is operated in much the same manner as

an automatic sprinkler. When the temperature in the stables rises to a certain point a weight is released which falls on a lever that in turn releases all the doors simultaneously. At the same instant certain noises are made mechanically which frighten the horses from their places. The releasing lever is occasionally operated by hand to give the horses a fire drill. Each horse soon learns to trot from its stall when the door opens and the alarm sounds.

Joseph Christiaens, the famous foreign racing driver, arrived recently on the St. Louis from England, bringing with him what is reputed to be one of the fastest cars in the world, a new Sunbeam Six, with which he reached a speed of 120 miles an hour at the Brooklands track abroad, in trial spins. Christiaens is here to enter his Sunbeam car for the Metropolitan Trophy race at the Sheepshead Bay Speedway on May 13. He will tour the country with his speeder after the local race, taking part in the contests at Indianapolis and Chicago later in the season. As the Sheepshead Bay track is supposedly faster than even the Brooklands track, the Sunbeam entry is expected to set some new figures for the circuit.

One of the simplest electrical devices known to the average person is the incandescent electric lamp. According to the Electrical Experimenter, if we could obtain a sufficient number of these lamps of the 20-watt size, and string them along a wire line from the earth to the moon, the lamps being fifteen inches apart, the amount of current necessary to light them would then represent the amount of power generated by all the dynamos in the United States, which in their entirety have an output of about 20,350,000,000 watts per hour. For another illustration we might stretch a line of two conductors fifteen times around the earth and place on this 1,000-watt lamps one hundred feet apart. The power required to light this gigantic line would also represent the electric energy produced by these ever-humming dynamos.

A number of medical men assure us that the longest dreams we ever have—even the dream that seems to carry us on through several days—actually occupies no more than a single second. Some authorities maintain that if our dreams were to last longer than a single second we should die. Other authorities are convinced that we do not dream at all when we are asleep, but only in the fraction of time when we are "twixt sleep and waking." It is also argued that dreams are nothing but distorted ideas and images passing through the drowsy mind, and being no more than extraordinary variations of things that we have thought or read in our waking moments, they can have no possible bearing on our future. But, on the other hand, says the Detroit Free Press, dreams have been credited with prophetic meanings since the world began, and "dream books" are still published and, what is more, eagerly purchased and consulted by a gullible public.

"A. J." FROM JAYVILLE

—OR—

THE BOY WHO WAS LOST IN THE BOWERY

By William Wade

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER XXII (continued)

The tug had now given up signaling, and was making for the shore.

They saw all lights disappear a moment later, and the tug vanished in the darkness.

"By thunder, whoever owns that boat will have to sweat for this," muttered Filly.

He gave an order to the man who was running the launch, and they turned and hugged the shore.

Soon they came in sight of a ruinous old frame structure, built at the back of the narrow strip of land which here runs along under the Palisades.

Behind it was a mass of broken rock, which had fallen down from the cliffs above.

The building backed up against these rocks, and while it was three stories high in front it was only one in the rear, this corresponding with the third story on the river side.

In front of the old mill there was a little pier, all dropping to pieces with age and decay, and it was to this that the tug had been tied up.

Fred Filly had the launch run in between two big rocks, where it was completely concealed.

"Now, Charlie," he said, handing the boy a revolver, "you want to keep a sharp eye out here, and see that our friend Hodges makes no move until we return. A. J. and I will take in the situation. If we find we need help we shall come back and let you know."

Fred Filly then went ashore, ordering A. J. to follow him.

"You want to go like a cat now," he whispered. "The least mistake may spoil it all."

"I'll go like an Injun, mister," replied A. J. "No one won't get onto my footsteps, you can bet your life."

They crawled up over the broken rock when they came near to the pier, previous to that keeping in the deep shadows of the cliffs.

Gaining a point close beside the wall of the old mill, they crouched on the rocks while Fred Filly took time to study the situation a bit.

There was but one person to be seen on the tug, and he was evidently merely a deckhand, whose business it was to keep watch.

"I'm stopping here so that in case they are on to us we can get on to that, A. J.," whispered Fred Filly. "We'll give 'em five minutes. They ought to make a move in that time if they intend to make it at all."

No move was made. Fred Filly now led the way behind the mill.

It was so dark here that A. J. could see nothing, but the detective produced a small dark-lantern, which threw but little light ahead, and two windows opening on the rocks were disclosed.

The glass was all broken out in both, and in one the sashes were gone entirely.

For a single instant the detective flashed the light inside, and then shut it off altogether.

"Now, A. J.," he whispered, "we come down to business. I see there are stairs in there, and as this room beyond the windows seems to be merely a loft our work lies below. You keep close to me, and we will sneak down those stairs. You had better take hold of my coat-tail so as to make no miss of it, but on your life don't make a sound."

The detective crept through the window, and A. J., following him, clutched at his coat-tail.

Fred Filly had been particularly careful to locate the stairs.

He felt that there would be no difficulty in finding them, and as for any break which might occur, he knew that he could feel it with his foot as he went cautiously down.

He was entirely unprepared for danger above, and entirely ready to deal with whatever danger he might by bad luck run into below.

He stole on, tiptoeing over the creaky boards, with A. J. clutching his coat-tail, when all at once came a crash, and Fred Filly knew that the game had been played to a finish and lost so far as he was concerned.

For the floor had given way beneath his feet, and he fell amid broken boards with A. J.'s yell of terror ringing in his ears.

An old rotten trap door which concealed the hoisting shaft had done the business for Detective Filly. He struck heavily upon his side and lay like one dead.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A. J. CAPTURES THE CREW OF THE PEACOCK.

A. J. yelled for all he was worth when the crash came.

He was quite ashamed of it afterward, but the accident came so suddenly there in the darkness that it was really too much for his nerves.

Yet A. J. came off first best, as he seemed to have the faculty of doing.

The old hoisting rope or "fall" still hung in the shaft, and A. J., reaching out blindly, managed to grab it.

Here he held on desperately, wondering what was coming next.

He heard poor Filly strike; he heard hurrying feet and whispering voices.

"Who in thunder is it?"

"Where did he come from?"

"Gee! It's Fred Filly, de detective!"

These and similar remarks A. J. heard below him, and then came one which concerned himself.

"Look up there! Is it a monkey hanging onto de rope?"

A light far brighter than Fred Filly's lantern was flashed upon him then.

"Monkey nothing. It's that blamed jay from Jayville!" a familiar voice cried. "Look out while I give him a bullet behind."

A. J. knew the voice.

Strange that he should have remembered it when he had forgotten so much!

(To be continued)

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

SAVED BY HIS TEETH.

H. Johnson, high climber for the Lytle Brothers Logging Company, east of Elma, was brought to the hospital recently with part of his hand severed.

"While suspended at the top of a pole 165 feet high," he explained, "I was working on a block when the cable on it slipped, catching my hand and pinching off two fingers. In order to save my entire arm from being drawn into the block, I had to grab the cable with my teeth and pull up enough slack to release my hand, as to let go my hold with the other would have meant certain death."

After Johnson had released himself he descended to the ground, minus two fingers and considerable blood, although not in the least excited. He said it was one of those accidents any one is liable to meet with.

A CLEVER DOG.

A woman rented a furnished house for the summer, and at the house was a large dog. In the sitting-room there was a comfortable armchair. This chair the woman liked better than any in the house; she always went straight toward it, but—nearly always she found the chair already occupied by the large dog. Not being well acquainted with the dog and his ways, she did not venture to order him harshly out of the chair; so, after a time, she fell into the habit of going to the window and calling "Cats!" Then the dog would leap down from the chair and rush to the window, and meantime the woman would sit comfortably down in the chair. One day the dog entered the room to find the woman in possession of the coveted chair. Presently he went over to the window, looked out, appeared greatly excited at something he saw, and set up a tremendous barking. The woman at once rose and went to the window to see what was going on and, while she did so, the dog quietly climbed into the chair.

BLACK OPAL COSTLIEST GEM.

What are rather misleadingly called "black" opals, to distinguish them from "light" opals, are regarded as among the costliest of jewels; their price, carat for carat, being in excess of diamonds. These precious stones were almost unknown until recent years; they are much rarer and many regard them as more beautiful than diamonds. These gems possess marvelous, changing colors, ranging from bright, green-glowing fire to gold and lavender. They are found in one region only, according to Popular Mechanics, a comparatively small tract of land in New South Wales. It is a wild and desolate area about 500 miles from Sydney. There is nothing to guide the miner in selecting a likely spot. The shafts average 40 feet in depth, and all rock has to be brought by bucket to the surface. Water and food are scarce, but the man who finds the gems makes his fortune. The Australian Government had an exhibit of these stones at the exposition in San Francisco.

HAD RUBBER TUBE IN HIS LUNG TEN YEARS.

Gus Parker, who was brought to a Hot Springs, S. Dak., hospital the other week from his home at Upton, Wyo., and in whose right lung a rubber tube was found after it had remained there unknown to physicians for a period of ten years, is recovering steadily from the operation for the removal of the tube. The presence of the rubber tube was discovered by an X-ray machine.

Ten years ago Parker had an abscess in his right lung and the rubber tube was placed in it for draining purposes. The tube finally was forgotten and remained where it had been placed by the physicians. Parker's health gradually declined. He visited many parts of the United States and even went to South America in the hope that a change of scene and climate would restore his health. But he failed to secure relief, and as a last resort decided to come to the Hot Springs hospital and have the surgeons carefully examine him for the purpose of discovering what ailed him.

The finding of the rubber tube was the result. It is expected that he will soon be as well as ever. For a period of five years he never walked a step or had on a pair of shoes.

24-HOUR RACE FOR SHEEPSHEAD BAY.

Arrangements have been completed for a 24-hour automobile race to be held on the Sheepshead Bay Speedway Friday and Saturday, June 16 and 17, under the direction of the Trade Racing Association, Inc. A sanction has been granted by the American Automobile Association and entry blanks are now ready for distribution.

The contest will be open to stock cars only, and the cash prizes offered total \$10,000. Besides the cash prizes is offered the Universal Film Trophy, which, it is said, is one of the finest trophies of its kind ever put up for competition. The trophy will be competed for in accordance with the terms of a deed of gift not yet disclosed. The cash prizes are to be divided as follows: First, \$4,000; second, \$2,500; third, \$1,250; fourth, \$1,000; fifth, \$750; sixth, \$500.

A 24-hour race has been under discussion on Automobile Row for several weeks and a number of dealers who favored the idea canvassed the trade to sound out the prospect for entries. When it was seen that support would be given, steps were taken immediately for the promotion of the contest. The Trade Racing Association, Inc., was formed and "Tom" Moore, a veteran 24-hour race promoter was engaged to manage the meet. Headquarters of the new organization have been established at 1733 Broadway, New York.

Mr. Moore is now scurrying about for entries and he believes that the assurances already given augur well for a large entry list. "Tom" believes that not only will several professional drivers compete, but the contest will see a number of private owners at the wheels of their cars. Dealers of Brooklyn and New Jersey are showing an unusual interest in the race and are going to co-operate with the New York tradesmen in making it a success.

FROM ALL POINTS

A baby white seal, said to be a rare specimen, was presented to the City Park Zoo, Portland, Ore., recently, the gift of United States Deputy Marshal Frank T. Berry. The seal was caught with a spoon-hook in the Sluslaw River, near Florence, Ore., while Berry was trolling for trout.

According to information brought here by a neutral traveler who is in a position to speak with authority, the German privates and non-commissioned officers stationed in the garrison towns are no longer provided with uniforms. These have been taken away from them and they are obliged to wear suits of workmen's corduroy which are given them by the Government. Cloth for the manufacture of uniforms of the ordinary field gray type is not obtainable.

An aerial ambulance, it is reported, is being built by a California manufacturer, and army aviators at San Diego, Cal., have been permitted to see it. Under the body of the aeroplane is slung a small cot, which is so fastened and constructed that it will be impossible for the occupant to fall out or even be shaken when the aeroplane volplanes to earth. It is understood that while the craft is en route to the hospital a trained attendant will be enabled to give first aid to the patient.

Albert O'Harr, sheriff of Muncie, Ind., is still trying to "dry loose" Frank McLaughlin from the County Jail. A friend paid McLaughlin's fine, but he steadfastly refuses to leave the jail until his sentence has been served, the sentence being for eleven days. "I never had a better job than this," said McLaughlin. "All I have to do is a little scrubbing out in the morning and I have a good, warm place in which to sleep and have plenty of things to eat in the bargain. Believe me, Sheriff O'Harr is the best landlord I've ever known."

After being given the first bath he has had in twenty years, according to his own admission, D. W. Hodson, who presented himself at the country farm for the poor, near Charlestown, Ind., suddenly disappeared. The mystery of his absence was solved when he showed up at his old home at Underwood, Ind., and told of the vigorous scrubbing the farm attendants administered. "Think of being souped in water at this time of year," said Hodson. "Why it's enough to kill a man. I might have forgiven 'em, at that, if the brush they used hadn't been so stiff."

William Anderson, a sixteen-year-old student in DeWitt Clinton High School, strode scantily clad up Broadway, New York, the other night. A crowd of other youths followed him, giving him specific instructions as to his deportment. In the large crowd which gathered at 106th street to observe him was Patrolman Saffer of the West 125th street station. Saffer arrested the lad and haled

him to the Men's Night Court on a charge of disorderly conduct. To Magistrate Ten Eyck the youth explained that he was being initiated into a school fraternity and his actions and lack of dress were in accordance with instructions issued by his schoolmates. Magistrate Ten Eyck suspended sentence with a warning.

It is freely predicted, and with every possibility of coming true, that the price of gasoline will go to 40 cents within a short time, and this can hardly be regarded as less than a catastrophe, especially at this time when business men are just beginning to appreciate the value of motor trucks for commercial purposes. This situation raises a point on which makers of motor vehicles have been noticeably silent, and that is the use of heavier fuels, which seems to be vastly more important than some of the improvements that have been occupying attention of late. An engine operating on distillate, kerosene or some other cheap fuel would be the salvation of the commercial vehicle business, and would appear to be absolutely vital where the much-talked-of farm tractors are concerned.

Officials of the Sulzberger & Sons Company plants in New York are expecting a visit of inspection from the new head of all the Sulzberger meat-packing industries, Thos. E. Wilson, whose headquarters are in Chicago. He was recently elected president of the concern, and was formerly president of Morris & Co. Mr. Wilson began as an office boy at \$3 a week. He is now 47 years of age and is earning \$250,000 a year, \$125,000 of which is in the form of salary and the other \$125,000 in the form of bonuses. Mr. Wilson was born in London, Ont., and went to Chicago when he was a small boy. His rise with Morris & Co. was very rapid. The confidence reposed in him by Edward Morris was exemplified, when, at Mr. Morris' death, Mr. Wilson found that Mr. Morris had bequeathed to him his Woodlawn avenue home, worth \$250,000.

Frank Winters, the man who smoked 100 cigarettes a day, was committed to the Pontiac Asylum by Judge Hulbert recently in the Probate Court, Detroit, Mich. The "incessant use of the cigarettes" was declared by Dr. S. L. Layton, who examined Winters, to have affected his mind. Frequenting a saloon at the corner of Chamberlain and Lawndale avenues, Winters smoked until his supply gave out and his money, too. After that he begged smokes from the customers of the saloon, according to Joseph Berman, the proprietor of the place. Berman petitioned the court to have Winters taken to an asylum. A German by birth, Winters was getting along well in this country until the cigarette habit got the upper hand. Given jobs by Berman, Winters even lost his power of application to simple work. "No more work for me," he would say, as he would sit down on the job, Berman told investigators. The nicotine undoubtedly had a deteriorating effect on his mentality, Dr. Layton declared.

BOWERY BEN

—OR—

THE BOY WITHOUT A NAME

BY J. P. RICHARDS

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER XX.

THE WORK OF A BRIGHT BOY.

As the stout man closed the door it was suddenly pushed open and two or three men passed out.

"It was only some one from the barroom," said the man.

Hudson looked up at the lighted window.

The sash was closed and there was no one in sight.

"What's the matter, anyhow?" asked Stapleton, who now came out.

"I'll swear I heard some one talking to the kid."

"Nonsense! She wouldn't talk to any one. She'd be afraid."

"Well, if you're going to get her out of here, I'd advise you to do it soon, 'cause I don't think it's safe."

"We're going to," growled Stapleton. "Come inside."

The three men went back to the private office and put their heads together.

"It isn't likely any one's following us," said the lawyer. "They're looking for a little girl. We've got a little boy upstairs. I fixed things on the ferryboat. You threw your men off, you say, and, anyhow, they wouldn't know anything about this business."

"There's that confounded boy," snarled Hudson, "Bowery Ben. He's all the time meddling with things what don't concern him."

"Well, what of him? He wouldn't hear about this thing for some time, and he doesn't know where to look for us any more than he knows his own name."

"H'm!" growled Hudson.

Then, after a pause, he muttered:

"He'll say we done it and put the peelers on us. He'll be sure that we're in it."

"Well, that's nothing. He can't do anything if he does tell the police. He doesn't know where to locate us any more than he knows his own name, as I said before."

"H'm!" growled Hudson again, looking at the floor.

"I admit that the boy is shrewd," said Stapleton, "and that he will make every effort to find us, but he simply can't do it, that's all there is about it. However, I intend to remove the child to-night to a safer place."

"I wouldn't waste no time over it," snarled Hudson.

"No, that's right; it ought to be done at once," assented the other.

Meantime Ben had passed through the hall and out of the saloon to the street.

There was a door alongside the saloon door, and this he now tried, finding it locked.

"I can't wait till some one comes out or goes in and then make a break for it," he mused. "How do the people that keep the saloon get upstairs? There must be some

other way. I didn't see any stairs, but there ought to be some. I guess I'll take another look. I've got to get upstairs some way."

He went into the saloon again, the place being crowded by this time, and passed into the hall without attracting any attention.

He passed his hand along the wall carefully, and just before he came to the outer door found another which he opened, finding that it was at the bottom of an inclosed stairway.

"H'm! no wonder I didn't see any stairs," he mused. "I never thought of any back stairs."

He listened attentively for a few moments, and, hearing no suspicious sounds, started upstairs, walking with a quick, light tread so as to make as little noise as possible.

Reaching the first landing above, he stepped out into a little hall, and then looked around him till he noticed that there was a light under a door over in one corner.

There was a low light burning in the hall, and by the aid of this he noticed two flights of stairs, one going up and the other leading down to the front of the house.

He crossed quietly to the door, where he saw the light, rapped softly and said:

"Lizzie! Are you there?"

There was a glad cry from within, a quick step, and then the sound of the child's voice at the keyhole:

"Is that you, Ben?"

"Yes," and then the boy tried the knob.

"The door is locked, and that bad, fat man has the key."

"Oh, has he? Well, maybe I can find another. You wait, but don't make any noise."

"Oh, Ben, I'm so glad you came. How did you know I was here?"

"Never mind about that now, sis. Just you wait. If I can't find a key somewhere I'll have to bust the door open."

Then he began walking slowly around the hall, muttering to himself:

"One key is as good as another in these old houses, and any one of them would fit all the locks. If I can find any key at all it will do."

He tried one door and found it unlocked, but there was no key in it.

Another was locked, but he had an idea that the key was hung up on the door frame, a custom prevalent in lodging-houses where he had lived.

He stepped close to the door and reached his hand up and down the frame on both sides.

"The old woman used to hang it on the side, and maybe these folks do the same. Hallo!"

He suddenly felt something under his foot, close to the door, and, stooping, felt something under the coarse carpet.

"H'm! that's another trick, too," he murmured, "sticking 'em under the mat or under the carpet. I guess folks are pretty much alike everywhere."

He put his hand under the carpet and drew out a brass key of a common pattern, such as are made by the thousands.

(To be continued)

A FEW GOOD ITEMS

Perkasie, Pa., manufactures more cigars than any other town in Bucks County, and also any other town of the size in the United States. It has seven factories, employing a total of 1,000 people. They manufacture 38,000,000 cigars a year. Wages average \$7,000 a week. Seventy per cent. of the local householders own their own homes. Cigar manufacturing in Perkasie was started in 1888.

A new piece of agricultural apparatus has been developed for the purpose of combating the destructive bugs and undesirable vegetable growths by an application of steam to the soil penetrating some distance below the surface. The machine carries a steam generating plant and moves over the surface on a large drum, the periphery of which is staggered with protruding steam outlets in the shape of blades or spines. As the apparatus is drawn over the ground the spines imbed themselves in the soil and while in this position the steam is released and penetrates the soil for some distance around the outlet, killing the worms, larvae and bugs and the undesirable crop of weeds which seed themselves from one season to another.

Loyalty of employees was rewarded by Montgomery Ward & Co. the other day in Chicago. Men and women who have worked for the mail-order house for a quarter of a century or more suddenly found themselves stockholders in the business. Robert J. Thorne, president of the concern, issued the announcement. All employees who have been with the firm for twenty-five years and receive less than \$2,500 a year in pay are to receive shares of the company's stock. Those who have been with the company for ten years and those who hold places of larger responsibility will be permitted to share in the purchase of the stock at less than the market value. These shares can be paid for in instalments covering a period of five years.

Virgil Simpson, 21 years old, an employee of the Maloney Engineering Company, of St. Louis, Mo., was killed by an electric shock in the electrical laboratory of Christian Brothers' College just as he had completed the construction of apparatus designed to increase the radius of the college's wireless telegraph station. The young electrician was killed by a transformer which he had made, and intended to give to the college,

from which he was graduated in 1914. He had just put the finishing touches on it, and was testing it when he received the fatal shock. This transformer and a larger one were connected, and the current was taken from a light socket. At the socket the lighting current had an intensity of only one hundred and ten volts, but this voltage was greatly increased after the current entered the transformer.

Germany, Austria and other war-rent countries of Europe, which have begun to conserve daylight, are thirty years behind Indiana. A cable dispatch from Berlin recently spoke of the daylight conservation idea as having been adopted there. The tenor of the dispatch created the impression that it was something new, when, in fact, the idea was adopted thirty years ago at the Speeds Cement Mills, north of New Albany, Ind. It was about 1886 when David Cook, manager, who still has charge of the plant, which produces Portland cement, realized it was a sin to waste the fine daylight, which permits work at 6 a. m., even on most winter days. He studied the matter, and soon the whistle for going to work sounded at 6 in the morning. It took some time for the men to get used to the change, but now they would not swap back to the old system. They begin an hour earlier and quit an hour earlier, and even during the winter the ten-hour day can be made.

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INTERESTING TOPICS

THE COST OF WAR.

If the war lasts until Aug. 1 next it will have cost the European nations about \$45,000,000,000, according to a computation made by the Mechanics and Metals National Bank of New York. The bank will issue a booklet devoted to the financial aspects of the war. Computations are being made by experts in this country and abroad.

The war is costing \$650,000,000 a week at present. The cost to Great Britain for two years' warfare will be \$11,600,000,000 up to Aug. 1; the cost to Germany a trifle less than that, and France's outlay will be \$9,250,000,000 approximately. It will be shown that total military expenditures of all the belligerent nations in the first year were approximately \$17,500,000,000, and in the second year they will be \$28,000,000,000 if hostilities continue till Aug. 1 next.

Great Britain's war expenditures, by the bank's computation, are now \$25,000,000 a day, as compared with little more than half that amount at the opening of 1915. The daily war cost of France is \$18,000,000 and of Russia \$15,500,000. So for the chief Entente allies every hour means the paying of more than \$2,400,000 for war. For the Germanic allies it is calculated that the hourly cost is more than \$1,000,000.

Prediction regarding the future is futile, the bank maintains. It recalls the manner in which the confident prophecies of 1914 regarding financial developments the world over have not been fulfilled, and sets up the sequel to 1914 as "a warning against any too confident predictions at the present time of what the future will bring forth."

AN UNUSUAL CASE.

An unusual case has just been tried over the bones of a mastodon by the Lauderdale County Circuit Court at Ripley, Tenn. The other week two little boys, David Darnell and Cherrell Boone, were setting traps on the farm of N. D. Salisbury, five miles northwest of here. One of the boys hurt his feet on what they thought to be the end of a large horn. Their curiosity was aroused by the unusual size of the object and the Boone boy went for his father to assist them in digging it out.

The father, Ellis Boone, came with implements and dug out a tusk weighing ninety-eight pounds and five feet eight inches long. Another tusk was found, but was broken in prying it out of the ground. A jawbone with four teeth was unearthed. The teeth, when removed from the bone, weighed five and a fourth pounds each and were in perfect condition. Several other bones were found.

There was also found the jawbone of some other animal, with the teeth in it. The back teeth of this animal are an inch long and worn, denoting that it was very aged when it died.

Salisbury contended that as the bones were found on his farm they were his. He had them replevined from Boone. Boone contended that by right of discovery they should be his.

The hearing was before Esquires Kinley and Dunavant. One thousand people were present. A decision was rendered in favor of Salisbury. Boone then appealed to the Circuit Court and that court decided in Boone's favor. Now Salisbury appeals to the Supreme Court of the State and that high body will pass on the case.

Local authorities are of the opinion that there is no law, ancient or modern, to just fit this case, and that the final decision will govern all such cases in the future. Salisbury was represented in the trial by T. C. Gordon of Dyersburg and W. C. Patten of Halls. Boone was represented by W. N. Beasley of Halls.

The mastodon itself is said to have been the only party within a considerable distance who didn't manifest some interest in the case.

AERIAL MAIL SERVICE.

The postoffice department is planning an aerial mail service.

The service will be to isolated points in Alaska and Massachusetts.

There will be eight routes, seven in Alaska.

The service will start about October 1st.

Bids on the routes have been asked by the department. The routes will be established, the Government announces, as much to stimulate development of aviation, because of its relation to military preparedness, as to improve the mail service.

The department believes that efforts already begun to finance an aerial patrol of the Atlantic Coast indicate ready capital will be found for the mail-service undertakings.

If the service is successful, it is announced a gradual expansion will follow to other routes where transportation is slow and inadequate.

The Massachusetts route is from New Bedford to Nantucket, fifty-six miles, and return, partly by land and partly by water. Trips would be made thirteen times a week during the summer months and six times in the winter.

An aeroplane would have to be able to carry a weight limit of three thousand pounds. The present cost of the service is twenty-three thousand dollars a year.

The Alaskan routes form a connecting link from Seward to Nome, thence to Fairbanks and back to Valdez. Most of them call for service twice a week throughout the year. On some of the routes the cost is as high as one hundred thousand dollars a year, and in winter six weeks is required to make the trip. The aeroplane contracts allow two days for most of the trips.

The longest route, Valdez to Fairbanks, is three hundred and fifty-eight miles. The extreme time limit of six weeks on some of the routes is required, because mail sometimes has to be routed via Seattle.

Postmaster-General Burleson has been assured, it is said, that capital already is considering bids and that estimates are being made.

PLUCK AND LUCK

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GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

For the twenty-first time in eighteen months the Lehigh Valley station, Centralia, Pa., has been a successful mark for thieves. Several private homes were entered, but they failed to yield much loot.

A big, live Russian bear has come to Tokio as a gift and tribute to Premier Count Okuma from the office of the Russian volunteer fleet at Vladivostok. The premier sent the animal to the Zoological Garden, which is one of the best in the Orient.

The Gilbert and Ellice Islands, in the Pacific Ocean, which were proclaimed a British protectorate in 1892, have now been annexed to the British Empire as a crown colony. The population of these islands was reported in 1911 to be 26,417 natives and 446 foreigners.

Counterfeit \$10 notes of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York are in circulation in New York City, the Treasury announced the other day. A department statement said the counterfeits could be recognized with little difficulty, as they are slightly too small and too stiff and thick.

Climbing a tree to search for an animal his dog had treed and which he thought was an opossum, O. O. Edens, who was fox-hunting with a party of friends near Carpenter, W. Va., encountered a wildcat near the top of the tree. With no weapon available, Edens managed to shake the animal off, and when it caught on a limb below him, he kicked it, forcing it to jump to another tree. The cat escaped.

An electric washing machine, which she had purchased to make her housework easier, caused the death of Mrs. P. M. Gates, of Pratt, Kan., when a scarf she had about her neck caught in the clothes wringer and strangled her. Mrs. Gates was seated by the machine while it was in motion. The ends of her scarf caught in the wringer wheels, pulling her from the chair and strangling her when she was unable to shut off the power. The fatal accident was discovered by a daughter when she returned from school, where she is a teacher.

Much uneasiness has been caused in Pekin by insistent rumors that the revolutionists have constructed a number of aeroplanes in Yunnan Province and have purchased flying machines from abroad, which they intend to use in attacking the Government troops throughout southern provinces. The central government already has several flying machines on duty along the Yang-tse River and has four machines at the aviation school near Pekin. Recently the Department of Military Affairs has issued instructions to provincial officials concerning the protection of their districts against aeroplanes. The instructions provide that a search shall be made throughout the mountains and forests to discover possible hiding-places for aeroplanes. It has ordered that watch towers be built on high hills for the purpose of observing approaching aircrafts, and roofs of all important buildings and all watch towers are to be covered with cotton soaked with water to a depth of six inches.

GRINS AND CHUCKLES

Briggs—What kind of a fellow is Willowsnap? Griggs—I don't know. I've only seen him when he was with his wife.

Foreman of Torrent Engine Company of Podunk (gazing at the smoking ruins, but speaking cheerfully)—Well, boys, we saved the engine.

Negative—How do you know he is dishonest? Positive—Dishonest? Why, I once saw him playing at solitaire, and he couldn't play the game without cheating.

"Paw," asked the little boy, "didn't you say in your speech that you expected the map of the world to be changed soon?" "I think I did," said the orator. "Then what is the use of my studyin' jography?"

Policeman—You are selling liquor after hours. Proprietor of Saloon—No; these men are burglars, and they are holding me up for drinks. Policeman—Ah! I owe you an apology. Pardon my intrusion. Good-night, all.

"Do you mean to say that manager has engaged you for next season at \$500 a week?" said one actor. "That's what he promises." "But, my dear fellow, that is a fabulous salary!" "No, I wouldn't call it fabulous. But I'm afraid it'll turn out to be mythical."

"Aw," said the Englishman, "it must be most unpleasant for you Americans to be governed by persons whom you wouldn't ask to dinner?" "No more so," said the American girl, "than for you to be governed by persons who wouldn't ask you to dinner."

"It's too bad!" said the man with heavy boots and chin whiskers. "There's a big ship called the Indiana, and one called the Massachusetts, and so on. But where's the New Jersey?" "Never mind," replied his companion. "We ain't slighted. I understand they's a hull bunch o' boats known as the Mosquito Fleet."

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES

ARRESTED FOR MURDER 24 YEARS OLD.

Tom Johnson, negro, wanted for the murder of Conductor James F. Nelson on the old B. & W. road, now the Atlantic Coast Line, between Lulaton and Nahunta in Wayne County on the first Sunday in July, 1894, has been arrested at Augusta, Ga. Conductor Nelson had had some trouble with Johnson and the negro drew a revolver and shot Conductor Nelson, who died instantly. Johnson made good his escape and has been a fugitive from justice for twenty-four years. This makes the third man that Sheriff Price has arrested and brought to Wayne County as the man who committed the murder, but this is the only one who has been identified.

FOREST WEALTH OF MOROCCO.

The preservation and exploitation of the forests in the French zone of Morocco are in charge of a special governmental department, which has given particular attention during recent years to the working of the cork forests of Mamora. These cover more than 500 square miles between Rabat and Mequinez. The bark is harvested by natives under the supervision of foresters brought out from France. It is expected, states the Board of Trade Journal, that this forest alone will produce a revenue of some \$800,000 within five or six years. There are a number of other smaller cork-oak areas in the region, and in other districts there are valuable stands of thuya, cedar, oak, pine, maple, juniper, yew and argan. Some of these are of great extent and contain magnificent trees, more especially cedars and oaks.

GREAT LAKES OF SODA IN AFRICA.

If Great Britain succeeds in capturing German East Africa she will come into possession of one of the greatest deposits of soda in the world. England has already an enormous deposit in Lake Magadi, which lies east of Lake Victoria Nyanza and about 280 miles from the sea, and consists of a solid block of almost chemically pure sesqui-carbonate of soda with a surface area of at least fifty square miles. It is known to be more than nine feet deep and may be fifty or a hundred. This lake is generally dry, when it looks as if frozen. After a rain it is covered with a layer of strong soda water. It is fed by many springs, all charged, and some of them saturated with soda. This proves that somewhere near by there is a far larger deposit. Across the border line in German East Africa are Lakes Natron, Egassi and Lawa-Yamwerie, larger than Lake Magadi, and formed of almost pure carbonate of soda. It is these that will become British in the event of England winning the German colony.

MANY INGENIOUS DEVICES.

An active service exhibition is being held at Knightsbridge, London, at which are displayed hundreds of ingenious devices for the comfort, health and safety of officers and men at the front. The money raised by the sale

of these articles goes to funds of the British Red Cross and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem.

Among the devices on sale is a small safety razor that will fit easily into a waistcoat pocket, a compact hot bath arrangement, together with patent cubes of "condensed heat," which will raise the temperature of water to the proper degree, a shower bath outfit and other toilet articles.

In order to enable the soldiers to write in the dark a combination pencil case and electric torch, to throw light on the paper, has been invented. The "nutshell canteen," as one little case is called, contains thirty-three assorted drink tablets, tea, coffee, beef tea and cordial ginger, six shields for corns, and a checkerboard.

A steel body shield, light but effective, also is for sale. Cases of bath salts for disinfecting purposes are displayed. A trenching tool with numerous uses attracts much attention. It is shorter than a man's arm, weighs less than four pounds, and will cut wire and dig up a macadamized road. It is equipped with pliers, a hatchet blade, pick and water tap key.

LONG SEA TRIPS.

The seas are always full of long overdue craft. On March 2, 1910, the four-masted bark Invernesshire sailed from Hamburg, Germany, for Santa Rosalia, in the Gulf of California. In the course of her passage, she was forced to put into the Falkland Islands to refit, and sailed again on her interrupted voyage on Sept. 27, 1910. From that time she was neither seen nor heard of until she arrived safely at her destination on Feb. 2, 1911, 338 days out from her original port of departure.

This voyage almost compares with the performances of the slow-sailing craft of earlier navigators.

On Nov. 19, 1587, the Desire, under the command of Thomas Cavendish, "a gentleman of Suffolk, England," set sail from the headlands of California for the English Channel. At break of day on June 8 of the following year, she fell in sight of the island of St. Helena. On July 3 she crossed the line and, taking hold of the brave trade winds to the limit of 40 degrees north latitude, she reached the port of Plymouth, England, on Sept. 7, 1588.

The sailing master of the Desire thought it worthy of record that running merely along before the wind under all the sail she could carry, his vessel went 140 miles between noon and noon, a boast which would excite the modern mariner to laughter.

Among some extraordinary voyages made by deep sea sailing craft within recent years there may be mentioned that of the Beacon Rock, engaged on a short coasting trip between two Australian ports. After all hope of her arrival had been abandoned, she turned up at Talachuano, Chile, some 6,000 miles from her intended destination. Being in light trim and consequently with no grip on the water, she had been unable to make any progress against head winds, and her master had been compelled to square yards and make a fair wind of it across the broad Pacific.

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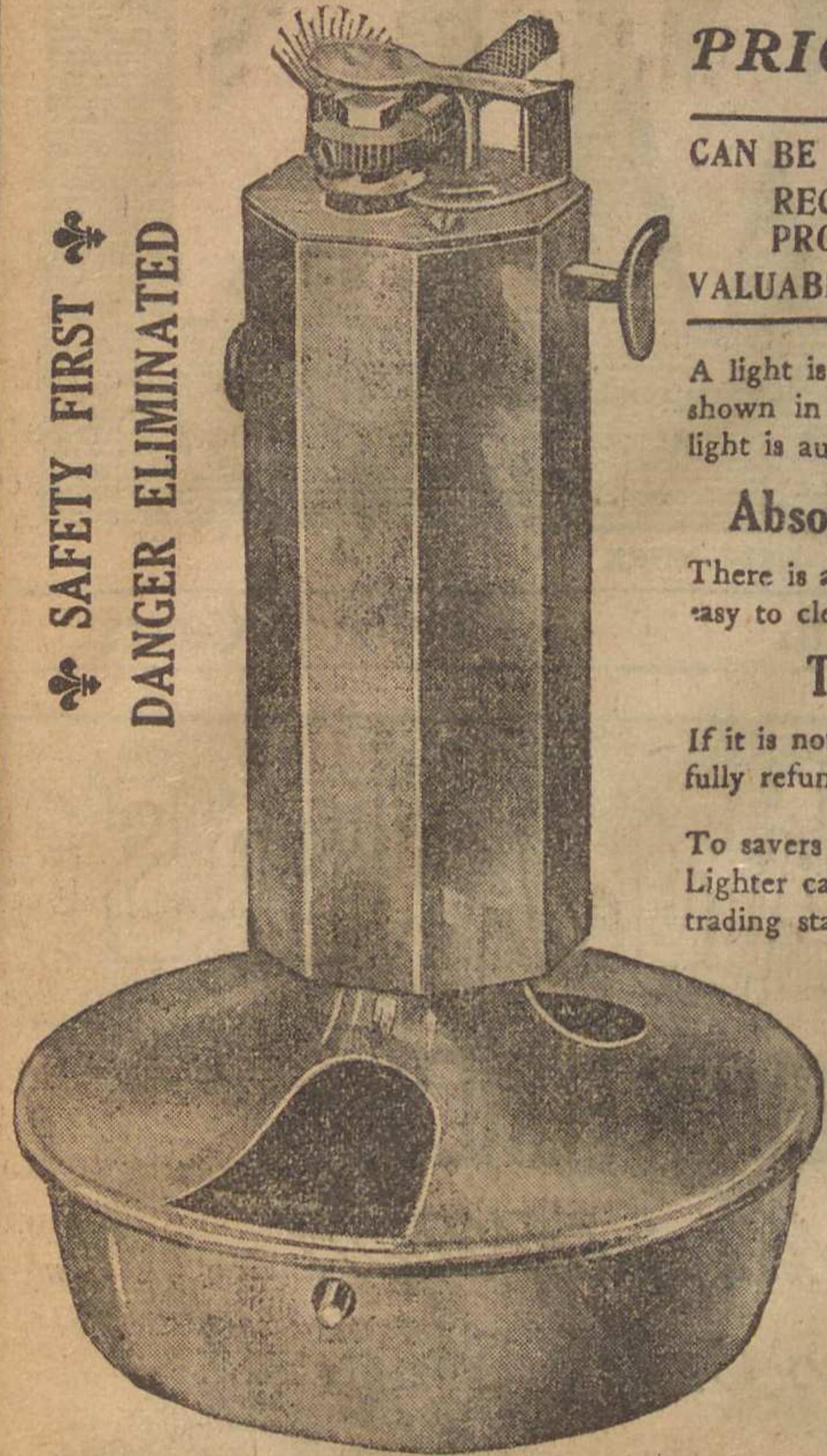
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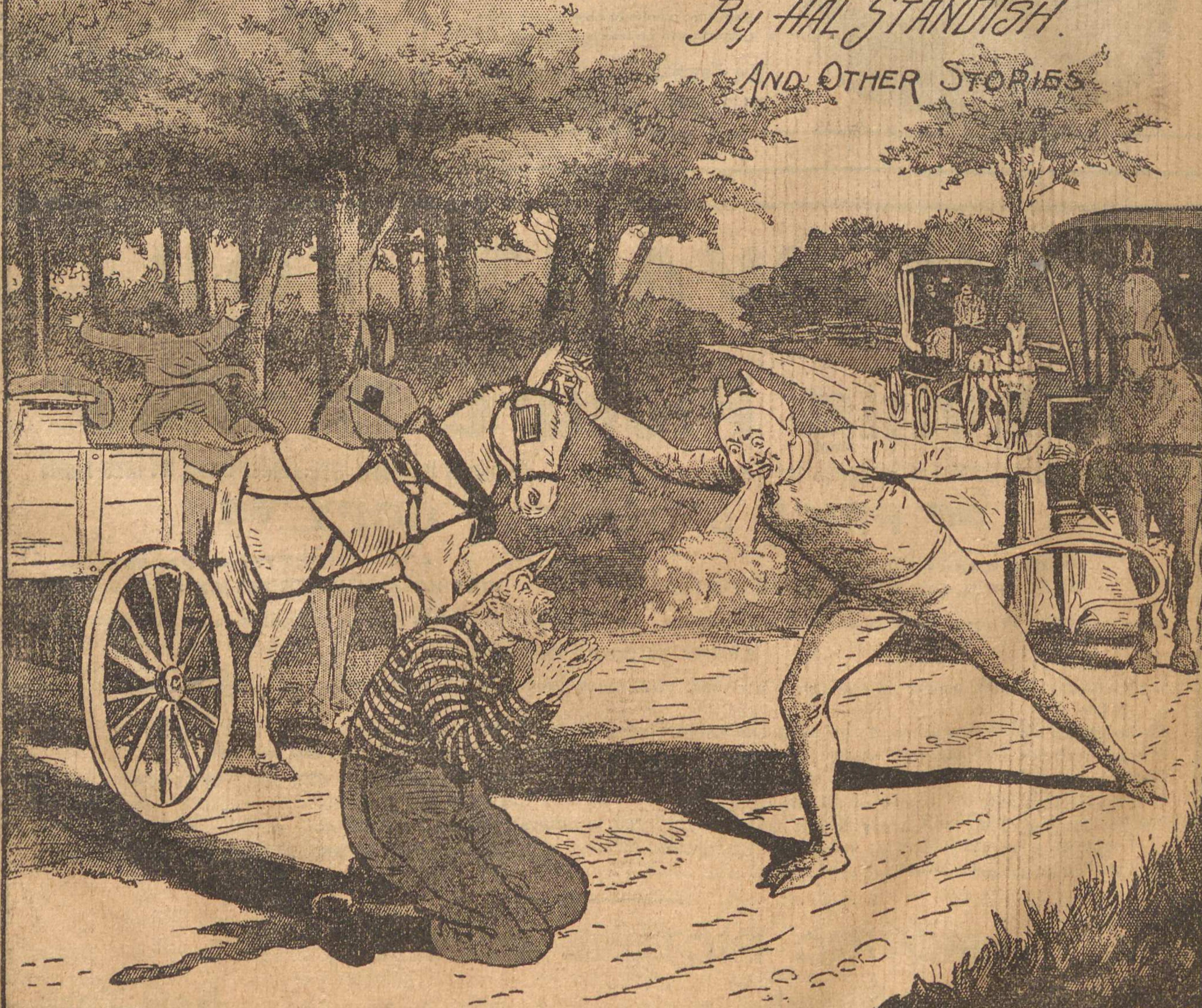
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